

CHRISTOS MYLONAS

SERBIAN

ORTHODOX

FUNDAMENTALS

THE QUEST FOR AN ETERNAL

IDENTITY

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The Quest for an Eternal Identity

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Christos Mylonas



Central European University Press
Budapest New York

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Published in 2003 by
Central European University Press

An imprint of the
Central European University Share Company
Nádor utca 11, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary
Tel: +36-1-327-3138 or 327-3000
Fax: +36-1-327-3183
E-mail: ceupress@ceu.hu
Website: www.ceupress.com

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ISBN 963 9241-61-X Cloth

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Mylonas, Christos.

Serbian orthodox fundamentals: the quest for eternal identity / Christos Mylonas
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN

1. Srpska pravoslavna crkva--History. 2. Nationalism--Religious aspects--Srpska pravoslavna crkva--History of doctrines. 3. Church and state--Srpska pravoslavna crkva--History. 4. Church and state--Yugoslavia--Serbia--History. 5. Serbia--Religious life and customs. 6. Serbia--Church history. I. Title.

BX713.M95 2003

281.9'4971--dc21

2003000641

Printed in Hungary by
Akaprint

*Επειδη το αδοκιμαστο και το απ' αλλου φερμενο
Δεν τ' αντεχουν οι ανθρωποι κι ειναι νωρις, μ' ακουζ
Ειναι νωρις ακομη μες στον κοσμο αυτον....*

Να μιλω για σενα και για μενα.

*Ειναι νωρις ακομη μες στον κοσμο αυτον, μ' ακουζ
Δεν εχουν εξημερωθει τα τερατα....*

—Οδυσσεα Ελυτη, Το Μονογραμμα

To my parents and Lia, whose support and love have sustained me.

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PREFACE

Simone Weil in her depiction of human roots—*l'enracinement*¹—had placed an emphasis on the significance of the past, as a measure of psychological security, experience and knowledge, necessary for the elucidation and construction of the future. In an almost reciprocal manner, prospective incidents seem to notionally emanate from the accumulated wisdom of inherent, ancestral convictions—assimilated and remodelled—underlined by the most profound and vital need of the human psyche, the compulsion for a past.

Without an exaltation of *ancestoritis*,² I am similarly intrigued by the cognitive and referential properties of historical genealogies, which in spite of assumptions about the progress of society toward a universal, modern form, remain a prevalent source of authority and allegiance. It is precisely the role of the past as a social constant and a lineage of thought in the life of the Serbian individual and his community—the context of the national imaginary—that this analysis addresses. The subject of spatial, temporal and notional continuity is not confined into a single, cataclysmic event, although the Serbian mind is permeated by the moral persuasions of the Kosovo parable, but rather pertains to a holistic signifier, a manifest and observable referent of a society persisting over time. Religion, as a “primordial” given factor of culture unites the psychic and physical hypostases of the human being and irons out the inconsistencies and incoherences of its transient existence. For this reason, Orthodoxy—the professed

faith of Serbianhood—provides an invaluable exegetic and evaluative perspective in the decipherment of an intricate *modus vivendi*, and is the thematic core of the present study. Stated in a more concise fashion, it is the main hypothesis of my work that Orthodoxy is the sacralisation of the Serbian national identity.

By identifying the Serbian confessional dispositions as the primal investigative axis of my research, I do not aspire to “essentialise” the ensuing notions of identity. Instead I am introducing a multi-faceted medium, consisting of doctrinal and functional (*cultus*) assumptions and precepts of the profane and sacred realm—to use Mircea Eliade’s distinction³—in the search for a “stipulative” paradigm. This analysis arose out of a concern for the possible actuality of a shared thread, a unifying principle, within which diversity—the Dinaric warrior, the Habsburg and Ottoman heritage, the communist and the reformer, the worshipper and the sceptic—and conformity coalesce. Orthodoxy in the form of popular belief,⁴—shared among people who know very little about official theological axioms but liturgically practice and adhere to it—affords a shared denominator, upon which a concept of Serbian identity could be forged. It is my intention to create a broad reference that advances the existing bibliography on the subject and contributes to a better comprehension of past, current and future developments in the context of Serbia. In the course of my analysis I do not approach Orthodoxy in terms of an exonerative social factor and a substitute for human agency, reason and responsibility, but as a concrete content, worthy of a thorough appraisal.⁵ This theoretical supposition pertains to *l’aire chrétienne*—Paul Valéry’s⁶ description of the spatial origins, of the monotheistic dogma—which attributes to its adherents—even to atheist advocates—an ethos and a behavioural disposition, “rooted” deeply into Christianity. A prevalent and salient societal constant, also manifested in those instances, when one turns his thought or action(s) against religion—Orthodoxy, in the present context—for even then, one continues to exist and function within its referential orbit.

Methodologically, the study is centred upon the review of diverse published material from the region, including specific journals—*Nin* and *Pra-vo-slavlje*—in conjunction with Western sources on the theme of religion—*Sobornost*, *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions*, and *Social Compass*. In the Serbian culture, the subject of Orthodoxy has only received limited attention, as an aspect of general analyses⁷—the work of Branimir Anzu-lovic and Michael A. Sells—or as the basis for the regional account (travelogue) produced by Victoria Clark.⁸ In the case of the former, Ortho-

doxy pertains to a supportive element of the mythopoeic construct of heavenly Serbia (Anzulovic), or to a legitimating agent of violent action(s), whereby intolerance and persecution are endowed with religious significance (Sells). In the work of Victoria Clark, Orthodoxy provides the notional link for the empirical exposition of the Balkan area (with the addition of Russia), which in many ways, constitutes a continuation of Rebecca West's earlier effort, with most of the entailed limitations—permeated by an emotive and not an exegetic disposition. On either count, Orthodoxy is diminished to an *amorphous* cultural signifier without any explicit references to her doctrinal or functional suppositions, often abased to a mere observation of her ecclesiastical functionaries, upon which conclusive suggestions are canvassed, of a moderate relevance and application.

In the light of the above and considering the extant research on the subject of Serb Orthodoxy, limited by socio-political conditions⁹ and a Manichean intent toward her¹⁰—from a hypercritical (profane) or an ecclesiastical (apologetic) stance—I decided to pursue my work within an interdisciplinary framework. Sociology and philosophy of religion, social anthropology, Serb folk poetry, history, theology and political theory contribute in the construction of a complete picture. Informal discussions conducted with Serbian people—of various ages and occupational/educational backgrounds—on their religiosity and their allocation of social values, have additionally assisted my thesis and offered me an interesting insight.

The full thesis is unfolded in the course of seven chapters. The obvious point of departure in my analysis is the delineation of the relevant thematic parameters to my hypothesis. In the first chapter, I present the basic argument in relation to the existing literature on the subject. This includes the expressed meaning of the nation, of religion and fundamentalism, these being the conceptual axes around which additional terminology shall be both introduced and discussed. Once defined, these are inextricably linked to a set of suppositions, determining the “range” of the hypothesis’ application. The second chapter subsequently explores the dialectical interaction between Orthodoxy and the Serb national identity. More concretely, it answers the question as to how religion, in fact, its “eternal core”, contributed to the formation of a national consciousness and of an acceptance of similar beliefs and attitudes. In this context it is worth adding that the non-universal nature of Orthodoxy demarcates the boundaries of the Serbian enclave, the constitutive features of which form a broad thematic unit, unfolding over a number of chapters.

In the first of these, (the third chapter) an account of *Homo Serbicus* is

presented and arguments are canvassed, in tune with historical references, Orthodox ethical precepts and the Serbian folk poetry. Importantly, attention is paid to the development and application of an ethical cosmology, its notions of conduct—personal or collective—and the corollary principles and modes of interaction. The cumulated observations are then applied in the fourth chapter, which discusses the repercussions—actual or potential—of Orthodox morality in the general perception of the Serbian political realm and advances the idea of profane salvation, pursued through messianic leaders and traditional/conservative institutions. The ecclesiastical structure is considered on the basis of its placement in the country's *corpus politicum*, and is measured by its relational character to both current and earlier political manifestations.

Within the scope of the Serb national imaginary the Kosovo myth deserves particular attention due to its penetrability of the Serbian psyche and its inner power of suggestion. For these reasons, it is the sole subject matter of the fifth chapter that involves the elucidation of martyrdom and suffering through references to poetic narratives, depicting the moral choice of sacrificial salvation, concretised by the battle of Kosovo. To complete the equation, the final—sixth—chapter on the Serbian enclave focuses on the issue and practice of violence in an investigation of Orthodoxy's potential contribution to various forms of intolerance and persecution. The analysis revolves around the question as to whether there are limits beyond which a fellow man, a “neighbour”, is not warranted the value to his or her well being. In other words, does an end justify—sanctify—the means used in its pursuance? The seventh chapter then places the hypothesis in the comparative perspective of the Balkan Orthodox commonwealth—Greece, Bulgaria and Romania—followed by final observations and concluding remarks.

The aforementioned development of the primal argument(s) may often involve, theoretically “dense”, passages—as introductions to the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters—supported by the use of an obscure and difficult terminology. As the theoretical substance of my work is drawn heavily from and depended on the various aspects of religion, the ability to further simplify a delimited, dogmatic or philosophical content is rather circumscribed. A concerned effort to substitute the extant “language” of Orthodoxy could lead to the misinterpretation and potential falsification of pre-existing notions and axioms. Under a similar line of thought the discussion of the constitutive properties of Serbianhood—its social environment, *corpus politicum*, violence and sacrificial proclivities—necessitate broader references to

relevant theories, which afford interesting, investigative perspectives to the overall analysis. Hence, the thematical and linguistic development of my work pertains to innate imperatives—not to be confused with an unwillingness to laicise my subject.

In the course of my research, while writing and revising my text, I have benefited greatly from the thoughtful supervision of Professor George Schöpflin and Dr Kieran Williams, who played a crucial role in the construction, articulation and clarity of my argument. My greatest intellectual debt lies with them. During the same period, I have enjoyed the support of a small circle of friends and colleagues who have provided me with a source of motivation, inspiration and emotional strength. I would like therefore to express my gratitude to Martin L. Furner, Milan Grba, Rebecca Haynes, Celia Hawkesworth, Maria Sotiriu-Uttley, Jullyette Ukabiala, Matthew Uttley and Radmila Vlatkovic. The greatest debt of all is to my parents and sister. Their invaluable support rendered the pursuit and completion of my work feasible.

Latin terms

Corpus politicum: political body

Communio in sacris: a (participating) community in the sacred

In illo tempore: from the beginning of time

Hic locus est: this is the point (point, being used in a geographical sense)

Homo Serbicus (Femina Serbica): Serbian man and woman (the terms are euphemistically employed)

vox populi, vox dei: the voice of people, the voice of God

extra ecclesiam nulla salus: outside the church there is no salvation

homo homini lupus: a man becoming for a fellow human being (man), a “wolf”

Notes

- 1 See Weil, Simone, *L'Enracinement* (Paris: Folio essais, 1990).
- 2 This interesting concept is coined by Clogg, Richard, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 2.
- 3 Mircea Eliade drew upon the Durkheimian distinction of the sacred and the profane and argued that religious values are imprinted as distinctions in space and time. The sacred manifests itself as “hierophanies”, as acts of creation and orientation, resulting in the identification of a sanctified place, a territory that is qualitatively different from its surroundings. The events of sacred time and the actions of the gods distinguish the meaningful from the meaningless

and the real from the chaotic. See Mircea, Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: the Nature of Religion. The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*, translated from the French by William R. Trask (San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1987).

- 4 Doctrinal and functional precepts of the sacred are culturally incorporated in the life of *Homo Serbicus* either as a genealogy of faith-sharing pre-existing ancestral beliefs and the wisdom of the old—or as an expression of divine providence and wrath. More profound existential issues, pertaining to the actual presence of God, may be socially witnessed, however, are countered by the precedent and accumulated knowledge—not open to further scrutiny—of the Serbian forefathers. See Bandic, Dusan, *Carstvo zemaljsko i carstvo nebesko: ogledi o narodnoj religiji* (Belgrade: Biblioteka XX Vek, 1997), pp. 257–78.
- 5 Orthodoxy's decipherment—for the purpose of my analysis—consists of the primary identification of her axiomatic and cultus assumptions, in particular of her supposition of the unity of the physical and metaphysical hypostases of the human being. Once her fundamental precepts are distilled, the progression of my argumentation revolves around their gradual application in the Serbian context—actual, notional, historical, cultural, political, personal and collective.
- 6 See Braudel, Fernand, *Η Γραμματική των Πολιτισμών, Μετάφραση, Αρης Αλεξάκης* (Athens: Μορφωτικό Ιδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζας, 2002), pp. 457–64.
- 7 See Anzulovic, Branimir, *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999); and Sells, Michael A., *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
- 8 See Clark, Victoria, *Why Angels Fall: A Journey through Orthodox Europe from Byzantium to Kosovo* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 2000).
- 9 Due to the communist experience and the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia, the subjects of popular religiosity, confessional affinities, liturgical practices and instruction have not been sufficiently documented in Serbia. Although the communist structure did not preclude a private adherence to the sacred, its public manifestation is a contemporary phenomenon. While modern studies on the issue of religion have not evolved to the same extent as in other regional countries (S. White, B. Miller, Å. Grødeland and S. Oates, “Religion and Political Action in Post-Communist Europe” in *Political Studies*, Vol. 48, 2000, pp. 681–705) the social customs, conduct, perceptions and folk poetry—a diachronic and salient referent of tradition—of the Serbian people provide invaluable insights to my analysis. To that end, the recent work of Dusan Bandic (*Carstvo Zemaljsko i Carstvo Nebesko—Earthly kingdom and heavenly kingdom*) with its reference to informal—popular—religiosity affords an interesting analytical perspective for the evaluation and apodicticity of my hypothesis.
- 10 For example, Christos Yannaras' perceptive and thorough work on Orthodoxy is permeated by his personal admiration for the substance of her faith, as one of the most prominent advocates of a neo-Orthodox cosmology in Greece.

CHAPTER ONE

NATION, RELIGION AND FUNDAMENTALISM LOCATING THE THEMATICAL PARAMETERS AND CONTEXT OF THE SERBIAN COSMOLOGY

Synopsis: *This chapter articulates the conceptual delineations of my primary hypothesis that views Orthodoxy as the sacralisation of the Serbian national identity. In fact, the notions of nation, religion and fundamentalism provide the broader evaluative postulates upon which the Serbian cosmology is examined and relevant theories are discussed. Assumptions are accordingly canvassed on the current social-political circumstances of the Serbian society, its stage of “development” and on a number of interrelated matters, which are introduced by the inclusion of the fundamentalist discourse.*

The Basic Argument

“...What irrational laws do we obey, what subjective signals allow us to establish the right direction at any moment, which symbols and myths predominate in a particular conjunction of objects or webs of happenings, what meaning can be ascribed to the eye’s capacity to pass from visual power to visionary power?”¹

The aforementioned statement belongs to André Breton and more specifically, forms a part of his introductory essay,² on Frida Kahlo’s exhibition in New York in 1938. In an effort to grant a more objective perspective to the interior “meaning” of her paintings, he described her work in a surrealist light, attributing certain intrinsic qualities to it. These qualities related to notions of the unconscious mind, repressed desires and dream

imagery, all of which—in both their artistic and literary expressions—formed the nucleus of the surrealist movement. Influenced by the Freudian theory of the unconscious, surrealism sought to embody the irrational forces of the subconscious mind.

The inclusion of André Breton's excerpt in the introductory part of my work has been a deliberate decision, since its thematical references offer a summary account of my own hypothesis. More specifically, in my syllogism,³ the religious dimension of the Serbian national identity replaces the surrealist appraisal of art as the primal point of investigation. Accordingly, the concept of cognition and its causal/effect relationship with popular mythology, symbols and "subjective signals" offer evaluative avenues to this end. "...the eye's capacity to pass from visual power to visionary power..." in other words, the transcendental and sacred dimension of religion is particularly operational in this context, in that hypotheses can be framed in terms of the moral, motivational and spiritual content of the identity. These matters are alluded to at relevant points to the main argument that can be subsequently summated in the following questions:

- What "makes" a Serb?
- What particular "properties" or fundamentals could be attributed to this identity?
- Are meaningful assumptions possible by introducing Serbian Orthodoxy as the primal point of investigation?

A further clarification to this argument should commence by accounting for my decision to use religion as the central perspective in the assessment and evaluation of the constitutive, core elements of Serbianhood. In fact, there are a number of reasons that account for this particular choice. Religion—in its doctrinal and functional (*cultus*) manifestations—forms the binding moral and social force in the aforementioned identity. By focusing on Serbian Orthodoxy, a number of interrelated issues become accessible to observation and to additional investigation. This applies to the prevailing allocation of values, the "subjective"—mythological and symbolic—, "objective"—temporal, territorial and linguistic—and historical capital of the Serbian cosmology.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, most human beings tend to subscribe and adhere to a set of beliefs and values that structure their social conduct, influence their behaviour and through which their material and spiritual world becomes comprehensible. To that end, religious precepts are often incorporated in the existing order of things, because they are divinely ordained, or they seem simply natural and hence uncontested. At a

fundamental level, Serbian Orthodoxy canvasses both action oriented and spiritual assumptions by highlighting certain values over others and also by investing legitimacy in particular “truths” and meanings. In doing so, religion—as a dogma and as a plausible structure derived from a cosmology—forges societal bonds and a collective spirit, upon which a sense of destiny—larger than individual existence—is created. A heightened sense of belonging is established in which the national (communal) element—common ancestry thought of as extended kinship united by blood—finds substance and meaning in religion.⁴ Orthodoxy—the professed faith of Serbia—becomes the normative and justificatory expression of a society persisting over time. It is precisely this close correlation and even their fusion, which shall provide the point of departure for the next stage of my syllogism.

To extract the bare bones of the Serbian identity and the basic assumptions that conditioned its development, I shall introduce the concept of fundamentalism. This is, of course, a highly contested notion which, in this context, shall be primarily understood in the etymological sense of the word. It relates to both the foundations and the fundamentals of the Serbian identity, that is, its inerrant or literal truth—not always substantiated but adhered to intuitively—an intuition that pertains to implicit (doxic) collective meanings that have been materialised. Fundamentalism hence explores the detailed characteristics of Serbianhood while locating them in time and/or space.

The purely etymological interpretation of the term⁵ constitutes a departure from the contemporary treatises on the subject.⁶ These have primarily focused upon the religious and political potential of the fundamentalist project with limited references to its theological assumptions. By confining the initial scope of my analysis to the etymological properties of the term, my work is provided with both a licence to critically appraise and evaluate the existing discourse on fundamentalism and importantly, to establish a distance, necessary for the scrutiny of its more controversial presumptions.

Of its very nature, the fundamentalist phenomenon elicits specific responses customarily reduced to the practice of extreme militancy. While the different dimensions of fundamentalism are both carefully considered and where appropriate, incorporated in my argument, the need for clarity and scholarly detachment point to the direction of the etymological interpretation. This decision should not, though, be confused with an apologetic predisposition towards my subject matter. On the contrary, an assessment

purely on the basis of the empirical evidence provided by the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, while “fundamentalist” in nature, is also reductive to a relatively “safe” bias and contrary to the purpose of my work. That is to establish a broad concept of Serbian identity of which violence—including the practice of ethnic cleansing—is a probable aspect of, however, not its sole property. My principal aim is to elucidate the “Serbian” in conjunction with “Orthodoxy” that will allow for a cluster of core, adjacent and peripheral concepts to be formed and upon which verifiable and falsifiable assumptions may be drawn.

This thematical cycle is subsequently brought to a conclusion by considering the parameters of a stipulative definition of the Serbian identity—this being the exact point of departure of my syllogism. At the same time, this is probably one of the more challenging parts of my work where the “individual” is projected to the “collective” and the unsubstantiated and intuitive converges with the objective and the observable. At close scrutiny, Serbianhood could be summated into a number of concepts, certain of which are more definable than others.

On a broader and more basic level, this identity is constructed on the assumption of an ethnically determined consensus. Ex hypothesis, its content and scope could be narrowed to its religious, linguistic, historical, symbolic and spatial/temporal properties. It follows that a number of variations may occur, which influence the range of the identity’s empirical applications. Its empirical dimension could be studied against the background of preferences, that are assumed to be made consciously, exhibited in actions and thus to be discovered by observing people’s behaviour. Moreover, this study of *Homo Serbicus*—the term being both conceived and considered on purely euphemistic grounds—also involves the emotional, spiritual, psychological or transcendental points of reference of their identity, which are significant in constructing comprehensive explanations of their existence. An existence that unfolds on a multitude of levels structured in and around the Serbian interpretation of Orthodoxy.

It would be highly instructive at this point to express concisely the preceding assumptions into a concrete hypothesis. To that end, it shall be concluded that Orthodoxy sacralises⁷ the Serbian identity by framing the parameters of its existence.⁸ The dialectics of their relationship delineate the morphology of the Serbian being and of its cosmos by capturing its diachronic essence and its “inherent truths”. Ostensibly, this correlation introduces a web of references through which subjective signals, myths and symbols are transformed into sound cognitive principles pointing towards

“...the right direction at any moment”—to partly paraphrase Breton’s introductory quotation. The justification of this claim is to be found in the identity’s capacity to locate the “visionary” into the “visual”, in other words, to inspire beyond the narrowness of the secular and transient demands of the world.

By its very nature, this hypothesis licenses a variety of thematic interpretations. In spite of the extant diversity, these interpretations share a common point of departure, in the current⁹ social-political circumstances of Serbia, under which religion finds significance. The placement of religion in a broader socio-political context provides a fairly permanent frame upon which an account of its functions and its relational character to relevant sub-systems could be formulated. My investigation hence concentrates on the causal-effect reciprocity between the institution of religion and the social conditions in which it is validated. Should the pre-eminence of the former be attributed to the general intellectual climate of the latter? Or instead, does the social environment in Serbia emanate from its forcibly atheist and communist past?

“And the Earth Was without Form and Void”:¹⁰

Reflecting upon the social conditions of Serbia

On a broader level, we may safely assume that religion does not exist in isolation and irrespective of its social setting. Although within its core a purely scriptural and mystical form may be identified—where present—it is in the life of societies and men that a religious content finds importance as a signifier of collective membership, subjectivity and representation. Religious references create a particular way of understanding the world and thereby giving it a form and content, with meanings and coherence as well as margins beyond which there is nothing or nothing meaningful. Religion forms an organic bond of communication by exploiting the applications of various notions and by ironing out their incoherences and inconsistencies. It is precisely for this reason, that it was regarded along with technology, language and social organisation through kinship, as the essential integrative principles, observable even at the early stages of human evolution.¹¹

The symbiosis of the religious sphere—in its ecclesiastical and profane expressions—with the societal domain, has not always been a harmonious one. In fact, the separation of state authority from religious precepts and in particular, the doctrinal rigidity with which European Christianity was

incrusted, was seen as a precondition for “mankind’s exit from its self-imposed immaturity”.¹² Accordingly, Touraine saw the institution of society as a progression from the realm of tradition and beliefs into the intellectual justifications of modernity and rationality. In the process, the sacred was separated from the profane¹³ and the “community” evolved into a society.¹⁴ Beyond the confines of the Protestant communion and further to the east and south of the continent, a similar social dichotomy, however, failed to materialise as *vox Dei* and *vox populi* remained in union.¹⁵

When reflecting upon this union in Serbia, references to either the evolutionary universals in society or the project of Reformation would certainly provide only elliptical statements on the country’s social circumstances. Both assumptions contain important elements of truth but do not exhaust the relationship, over time, between the organisational characteristics and the diverse or changing ideologies worldviews and programmes experienced in Serbia. These processes were endured within the duality of the “traditional”, that is the use of the past as a cultural signifier valued in the present, and interaction with the dynamics of modernisation. Their juxtaposition summates the inherent contradictions found in the country’s recent history, oscillating between perceived and actual backwardness¹⁶ and the dialectics of modernity.

In terms of backwardness, I concretely allude to the region’s belated processes of urbanisation, industrialisation and the ensuing complexity involved in social-political transactions,¹⁷ as well as the perennial problems of economic and political underdevelopment. This is contrary to notions¹⁸ that exclude the Balkan region from the realm of the “civilised” world by attributing to it the invidious character of the traditional, as being inferior and needing assistance. Under these circumstances, the Serbian society maintained forms of religious affinity—principally on a personal and intermittently on a collective level—and credence on territory—in a primarily territorial perception of the state—while encountering modernity through the communist medium. If modernity is perceived as an autonomisation of several sub-systems and spheres of rationality, then communism tended to integrate these elements, under the pretext and guidelines of egalitarian values.¹⁹

The equation of communism and modernity in Serbia requires further elucidation following on from the assumption that the latter is a perceived reality. On a theoretical level, the Marxist-Leninist predisposition toward the prospects for human development and personal growth—forged on sociability, co-operation and rationality—was in line and in support of the modern project.²⁰ Modernisation, in consonance with the Weberian inter-

pretation of the term, is understood as the cumulative manifestation of mutually reinforcing processes. In terms of economic organisation, these include "...the formation of capital and the mobilisation of resources, the development of the forces of production and the increase in the productivity of labour".²¹ A centralised polity that affords a measure of proliferated involvement frames their political expression.²² Their societal impact is experienced through increased urbanisation that introduces secular forms of life and promotes a concept of national consciousness.²³ The correlation between modernity, as a primarily socio-economic form of development and communism, as an ideally centralised political system, materialised through the processes of industrialisation. That is the construction of a modern industrial society, as an environment within which socialist norms and values were to be realised.

Processes that could prompt organisational alteration may also debilitate the cognitive abilities of both common members of the society and producers of ideas alike.²⁴ Through the aspiration of a greater prosperity, industrialisation progressively changed in Serbia the balance between the urban and the rural.²⁵ This was the time when the consequences of the socialist revolution appeared to entail the erosion, if not the outright destruction, of aspects of the social heritage, most notably perhaps, that of local communities—through urbanisation—the parish and the institution of the monarchy. In their place, the notion of brotherhood and unity—*bratsvo i jedinstvo*—developed into a form of civic religion, which found its apotheosis in the Yugoslav "communion". By civic religion, I refer to cultural focal points of celebration and sacrosanct veneration found in communist mythology, symbols, rituals, ceremonies and beliefs that served the Yugoslav authorities as instruments for public legitimation and solidarity. This seemed essential in order to overcome the cleavages, which originated in the country's ethnic and religious heterogeneity. Furthermore, Yugoslavism, as a political movement that proclaimed both infallible socialist values and inevitable historical processes in communism could be also deemed "religious".

In hindsight, the extent to which Yugoslavism superseded and even replaced the religious content of the Serbian identity is highly debatable. In its indoctrinating and socialising function, communism became a significant notional, emotional and intellectual component of Serbianhood. In fact, the Serbian peoples were closely attached to the Yugoslav idea,²⁶ a sentiment deeply rooted within the country's inception. An important consequence of this can be observed by the identity crisis and the vacuum of

faith that followed the collapse of communism in Serbia. The demise of the Yugoslav project,²⁷ in itself an incomplete process of modernisation,²⁸ re-introduced religion as a self-repairing societal mechanism. By modernisation I specifically imply to the inconclusive outcome of secularisation in Serbia. That is the failure of the socialist discourse to construct on all levels—through differentiation—identities and systems of meaning which are sacralised by agencies other than the institution of religion.²⁹ Hence, structural, political and cultural conditions have allowed for the re-examination of the role of the latter in influencing the magnitude and pace of social evolution, in the context of an atomised society. This development materialised within an étatist framework that was the sole originator of social organisation and initiator of collective action.

Anomie, corruption, de-legitimation, endemic populism,³⁰ the demise of state authority and nationalism, the trauma of ethnic wars and messianic leaders—promising deliverance and an era of peace and prosperity—have since plagued the post-communist experience and discourse of the Serbian society. Radical ideologies, intolerance of diversity and hostility to individualism found their expression in popular appeals to the national collectivity. A sense of helplessness and despair emanated from instinctive reactions against changes in the traditional way of life, “imposed” by unknown and all-powerful social and economic forces that were located in foreign capitals.³¹ In these circumstances, religion provided a topography of perceptions and a language for the articulation of common grievances and views not catered for within established political conventions.³² Religious beliefs as a pervasive aspect of social life that satisfies psychological and societal needs, were necessary in order to ensure the stability of the Serbian society and to embody a kind of truth.

As Marx concisely observed, “men make their own history but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under... [those] directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past”.³³ Thus, the need to formulate the past in order to define and determine the present was accompanied by the review of both the Serbian ontology and cosmology. Popular historical discourses, including the glorification, mystification and falsification of the national genealogy and past³⁴ emerged as a source of inspiration upon the basis of which images could be evoked, boundaries erected and social forms and figures could be created. Social dislocation and losses in adaptation brought into the fore, values associated with heroism in the battlefield and valour with the primal point of reference being the battle of Kosovo.

The present is attached to the past through commemorative rites and ecclesiastical ceremonial, which seek to distil a world of experience into its basic qualities as these are culturally conceived. This has reasserted the importance of the desired role that a revived religious dimension should perform in the Serbian society—in its incompletely secularised context. In particular, the placement of the Serbian Orthodox Church—a social/cultural institution with political ambitions and potential—is vital, as in many ways she encapsulates the “Serbian experience”.³⁵ Religion in its pure or revivalist form is essential to the creation of the social-political cosmos, in which a culture of Serbian nationalism finds significance.

According to Hegel, “man is this night, this empty nothingness which contains everything in its simplicity... representations, images, infinite in number, none of which emerges precisely in his mind, or which are not always present... The power of drawing images out of this night or of letting them slip away into it, [this is] the fact of positing oneself, internal consciousness, action, division”.³⁶ The religious capacity to evoke images and to interpret circumstances beyond their purely empirical substance, in other words, the ability to produce transcendental imagery, found its ideal application in the Serbian society—based on its internal necessities and current mode of being. Within the limitations of historical development, religion maintains the Serbian community of faithful in an organised manner by relating orders, commands, inducements and consequences for actions and by rendering their substance, in appearance at least, obligatory and binding for its adherents. A correlation may be hence drawn between religion and the two-dimensional³⁷ interpretation of power, by viewing the former as an exercise of choice that is limited in an overt and a covert fashion.

This process is only validated within a broader assumption that places a “religious content” in almost every member of the Serbian community. Of course, in the particular identity, various gradations could be identified, including the radical dualism between believers and sceptics/atheists that consequently do not allow for a simplistic or uniform treatment of the religious subject. While these gradations are socially prevalent—attributed primarily to the communist legacy—it is the performative enactment of religion, as a referent of order or as an exegetic signifier (affecting many non-overtly religious persons who exhibit a behaviour influenced by the Orthodox tradition)³⁸ that is significant at this stage of my syllogism. Religious belief would not mitigate the problem of anomie in the Serbian society, unless its members, who comprise the nation, collectively proclaim

its value. Only then, could religion function as a rallying point for those Serbs who seek to spiritually limit the traumas of disorder and devastation of their current social conditions.

What Is Religion?

A synoptic appraisal

Most discussions on the institution of religion are confronted by the problem that there is not an ascertained definition of the concept but rather a collection of interpretations. In the first place, there are numerous religions to be accounted for in the world. Furthermore, as most notions of religion acknowledge the relation between beliefs and theories on the one hand, and of theory and praxis on the other, the term licenses a variety of possible representations—notional and contextual. A synoptic appraisal of the concept would subsequently correlate religion with the following properties: a belief system; an abstract and highly systematic set of action-oriented ideas, which situate the individual within a social context and generate a sense of collective and spiritual belonging; and a cognitive/semantic order.

The etymological origins of religion are only marginally clearer and are associated with the ecclesiastical structures—as an organised system of a collective dependence, involving prayer, instruction and ceremonial rites. Collins' English dictionary attributes the origins of the concept to the Latin *religio*, denoting a “fear of the supernatural, piety”³⁹ and *religare*, “to bind”⁴⁰. Functional⁴¹ interpretations of the religious experience emphasise the element of “belief in, worship of, or obedience to a supernatural power or powers, considered to be divine, or to have control of human destiny”.⁴² Reflecting upon the functional nature of religion, Clifford Geertz⁴³ distilled its essence in “a system of symbols, which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting... motivations in men by formulating conceptions of the general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the... motivations seem... realistic”.

The institution of religion could be deciphered into a doctrinal content and *cultus*⁴⁴—its functional antipode. The former includes specific institutionalised aspects of religion with which human ideas coalesce. In other words, theological assertions and codes of sacred law fulfil the need for critical intelligence and are directed to human concerns.⁴⁵ The *cultus*⁴⁶ pertains to ethical practices and rituals by which the religiosity of a community is expressed, in an orderly and prescribed manner.

From these assumptions conclusions may be drawn about the societal and sacred character of religion. The latter mainly alludes to the “superhuman power or powers”, as an external referent whose awesome quality lies beyond the confines of human comprehension. Yet, man is made aware of its omniscience and omnipresence, by the instrumental practices of obedience, worship and belief or the social implications involved in any departure from the established norm of faith. Under the circumstances, religiosity confers a salient sense of order within the personal and collective life, in a synergetic relation to the extant historical, cultural or genealogical considerations. The religious experience is subsequently objectified through a “belief in a deity... a doctrine of salvation, a code of conduct, the use of sacred and religious rituals (acts and ceremonies)”.⁴⁷

The prospect of redemption and reprieve—from either a sinful act or from the consequences of spiritual and physical degradation—constitutes the highest aim for the worshipper(s). Through the mere awareness and belief that truth and love—according to Christianity—are supreme and they can destroy the afflictions of sin and death—as in doctrines of the after-life—religion provides an internal source of human strength and knowledge upon which unfavourable situations could be overcome. It is precisely the politicisation and articulation of this conviction, in the moral awareness and integrity of the sacred that enables the representation of society’s collective power.

Durkheim’s perception of the sacred as an expression of social cohesion closely approximates the theoretical and functional use of the religious subject, found and appraised in my analysis. Before I proceed with the placement of my hypothesis in the Durkheimian discourse, I shall provide additional views on religion, which further elucidate the course of my argumentation.

“If God Does Not Exist, He Would Have to Be Invented”⁴⁸

The meaning of religion in a theoretical perspective

From an anthropological perspective, the significance of religion lies in its ability to provide a community with a comprehensive and yet distinctive, vision of the world, the self, and the connection between them.⁴⁹ What lies beyond a relatively “fixed” boundary of accredited knowledge usually places

the human existence within a context of metaphysical concern. The religious response is to produce a pretext of general ideas, in terms of which a broad range of values—moral and emotional—or judgements can be granted meaningful substance. There is certainly a common enough perception of religion, as the diagnosis and “remedy” for the ailment of the human condition.

T. H. Green identified the essence of religion with its ethical applications. Rudolph Otto founded his assessment upon feeling, on the desire for happiness, the passions of hope and fear.⁵⁰ For Ludwig Feuerbach “the essential standpoint of religion is the practical or subjective; the end of religion is the welfare, the salvation, the ultimate felicity of man”.⁵¹ Malinowski’s interpretation of primitive religion—based on his observation of the Trobrianders, a Melanesian people—established a connection between religious affinity and the continuation of a collective tradition. This led him to the conclusion that “religion makes man do the biggest things he is capable of, and it does for man what nothing else can do: it gives him peace and happiness, harmony and a sense of purpose, and it gives all this in an absolute form”.⁵² The pursuit of peace and harmony materialises through the practice of rituals, which strengthen social values and obligations, particularly in moments of weakness and anxiety.

Radcliffe-Brown similarly emphasised the functional relevance of religion—in the form of rites—to societal order by attributing the constitution of the latter to the regulation or transmittance of ideas and emotions by the former.⁵³ Berger perceived religion as a system of meaning upon which evaluative and exegetic avenues of personal and collective experiences are forged. In religion, he recognises “one of the most effective bulwarks against anomie throughout human history”.⁵⁴

The aforementioned accounts approach the religious subject from a functional point of view. It is precisely this perspective of moderate functionalism⁵⁵ that I shall apply in my study of religion within the Serbian culture. This shall allow for a close scrutiny of the societal, cognitive and evaluative principles of religion, while placing these in the broader Serbian context. The contextual correlation of the religious with the cultural is based on Malinowski’s observation, claiming, “that in every type of civilisation, every custom, material object, idea and belief fulfils some initial function, has some task to accomplish, represents an indispensable part of a working whole”.⁵⁶

Religion in Serbia would be synonymous with the structure of social values held and traditionally transmitted through a cultural matrix of sym-

bols, myths, narrative and ritual. These values involve concepts of right and wrong, better or worse, higher or lower, that are not rendered valid by individual choices and inclinations, but rather stand independent of these and offer standards by which they can be judged. In other words, religious affinity would be viewed as "...one's way of valuing most comprehensively and intensively".⁵⁷ It follows that a community without religion would have to operate without a unifying principle⁵⁸ and certain clarifications, confirming its societal order.⁵⁹

It becomes apparent that my understanding of religion—*cultus* and doctrine—is located in the overall thought of the Durkheimian sociology. Durkheim's idea of the sacred realm as the expression of society's awareness of itself draws upon the thesis that religious behaviour is an aspect of prescribed social behaviour.⁶⁰ For him, the sacred is essentially an artefact of society. It is a necessary set of conventions resting upon a particular division of labour, which produces the energy for that kind of system. It is this placing of proximate acts in ultimate contexts that renders religion socially prominent. To Durkheim, "religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices, which unite into a single moral community called a church all those who adhere to them".⁶¹ The sacred content that is set apart and forbidden is rendered graspable through ritualistic practices, consolidating the relation between the individual and his or her society. These practices invariably embody social prescriptions and traditions whose contribution to moral life is considered of equal significance to that of food for one's physical preservation.⁶² Thus, a deep sense of moral identification is evoked, reinforced by the danger of crossing forbidden boundaries.

In the Serbian society, religion provides the boundaries, which endow life with its customary patterns. In marking its own territory, religion affects all lower levels of thinking, so that people realise their own identities and also classify each other through community affiliation. Through religious symbolism every element of nature and of human activity is rendered intelligible and in the same stroke a broader meaning on the universe and the place of mankind in it, is conferred. The institution of religion hence affords to its members analogies with which to explore the world, sets the terms for self-awareness and secures the social edifice by sanctifying the principles of "justice". This is precisely Durkheim's notion of the sacred and for that reason I shall correlate religion with the social cohesion in Serbia. To that end, I regard religion as the social expression

of all that is important about the Serbian being and his collectivity. In doing so, I remain mindful of the fact that not all instances and experiences of social effervescence are of a religious character—a criticism applied to Durkheim’s analysis of religion by his contemporaries, since he contributed the rise of faith to a heightened sociability. Nonetheless, as the religious content of *Homo Serbicus* emanates from Christianity, which according to Georges Florovsky “... from the very beginning existed as a corporate reality, as a community”,⁶³ the Durkheimian correlation of the sacred with the social approximates the theoretical needs of my analysis.

A brief account of the Christian faith shall further confirm the validity of the preceding assumption. The relation of Orthodoxy and Serbianhood is the primary subject of the next chapter.

Communio in Sacris

Christians are acknowledged as brethren,⁶⁴ as members of a closely connected fellowship. Christian unity is rooted within religious belief and practice through which a group’s ethos is rendered intellectually justifiable. Moral preferences are depicted as imposed conditions of life, implicit to a particular social structure. The emergent system of belief and ritual is related to the history and fate of the community, and not to mankind at large. Common language and allegiance to a set of rules are means by which religion is incorporated to the social whole.⁶⁵ The coercive “ought to” emanates from a factual *is*, grounding behavioural prescriptions in the context of the human existence. At every moment of its history, the Church—as a socially and divinely sanctioned institution—provides to its congregation a vision of truth. It could be argued that moral perceptions are primarily originating⁶⁶ in the Church, since “it is very rare and difficult for an individual to choose a moral stand on (personal) rational grounds”.⁶⁷

The Church hence constitutes a visible historical society. The “instituted” ecclesiastical community organises public memory, and imposes certainty on uncertainty. In this context, tradition becomes the delivering of a precious deposit, whose source is held to be divine, to a specially selected group and society. The maintenance of tradition is the acceptance—with unlimited credulity—of all that is insinuated into the life of the Church to remain there by force of habit.

In Christianity, there is a traditional element in the literal sense of something transmitted from the past that is definite and concrete. It con-

sists of a sacred scripture, which is treated as something of supreme value. The very material, on which it is written, becomes in a measure sanctified. Tradition is inevitably endowed with qualities that belong to the Scriptures. It will be the ensemble of "other writings" or of unwritten "other words", that is, all that the Church can add to the Scriptures on the horizontal plane of her history. The historical transmission of the scriptural content confers to the tradition—both spiritual and ecclesiastical—its enduring and distinctive character.

The institution of the church becomes "traditional"⁶⁸ when it is recalled that it formed a part of an ancestral legacy. Since history exists only because men communicate and cooperate in a symbolic milieu, a certain "permanence" is attached to particular places and a certain group quality or trait. Usually the traits that are treated as desirable are those which indicate superiority. Complementary to these are perceptions about neighbours and enemies—notional and actual—which bestow on them a measure of inferiority or immorality in defiance of demonstrable historical facts.⁶⁹ Without these innate and pervasive convictions, pertaining either to the didactic nature of ancestral incidents—the national imaginary—or to specific collective attributes, it would be difficult to construct or propagate a symbolic capital.

In Eastern Christianity, the institution of the Church has always been synonymous with the entire congregation of the faithful or at least those of a particular persuasion.⁷⁰ The interruption or even the destruction of her representational—ecclesiastical—function would—in most cases—signify the destruction of a recognised hierarchy. This is particularly important in the contemporary account of the Serbian Orthodox Church. To understand the current circumstances of the Serbian Orthodoxy is to comprehend her ontological assumptions as the derivative of problems, conflicts and privileges experienced over the years. Having remained in existence, in spite of an almost total lapse of her societal function,⁷¹ she has since become a referent of regeneration. The Church is seen as an instrument, ideally placed—in the social construct—and perfectly adequate, for the expression of a pre-existing content, on the substance of human relations. Imposed by internal necessities, —corresponding to society's mode of being, —ecclesiastical axioms and dogmas became for the faithful a rule of conduct, concretising the boundary between orthodoxy and heresy, between knowledge within the ecclesiastical tradition and knowledge determined by empirical observation.

As a result of circumstances, the Serbian Church found herself obliged to express her faith in the form of dogmatic⁷² definitions, in order to de-

fend her congregation against the thrust of heresies. One could speak of a dogmatic propensity as the formulation or even the delegation of ecclesiastical perceptions, originating in—to take as a point of departure—dogmas which already exist, and which constitute a “rule of faith”. Could the pursuance, however, of the “fundamental” Orthodox traditions, assume a reactive and selective mode of anti-secular religious activism? Could fear of discarding the accumulated emotions and wisdom—distilled by transmitted ideas—culminate into an absolutist attitude? Is it possible to account for “fundamentalism” in the Serbian Orthodox Church?

In untangling these complicated questions it will be helpful to resort to a simplified schema, which focuses initially on a definition of the Serbian national community, supported by references, to the extant scholarship on the subject. In subsequence, the accumulated assumptions shall be located within the fundamentalist discourse.

Defining the “National” within the “Serbian”

The progression of my syllogism has thus far identified religion as the primary attribute of collective subjectivity in Serbia, a position confirmed upon historical processes, which correspond to the need for a coherent identity. The emergent energies and loyalties interact with the dialectics of assimilation and differentiation, and religious orientations are anything but impartial in this process. Supporting an inclusive perception of identity—despite an enhanced capacity for adaptation and the multiplication of its foci⁷³—accordingly creates social solidarities and collective references of a national distinction. Through the awareness of this identity, as a primordial given factor of culture, the Serbian society is capable of persisting over time.

The formation of this identity is reciprocally related with the institutional and symbolic context,⁷⁴ in which it is validated. When an identity correlates to a modern state or with the inhabitants of an established one then its precepts depend upon public obedience and state control. When it is an expression of cultural fellowship and of national attributes, the identity implies active standardisation and integration toward an “authorised” national code—essentially ethnic, supported by linguistic and affinitive subsystems. Historical myths, concerning its unique character, often serve the same end. When the collectivity is seen as an emotional fellowship, then the identity’s manifestations are intended to stimulate national feelings.⁷⁵

The process by which the Serbian people associate and classify themselves could be attributed to institutional and symbolic-ethnic grounds, with an implicit imbalance in favour of the latter, though it should be emphasised that personal, local and regional references remain operational. Through the integrative and homogenising force of the étatist structure, experienced as a standardised educational system, the introduction of a vernacular language and the growth of communication and transportation networks, a national perception is progressively canvassed.⁷⁶ However, as it has already been pointed out, these processes within the Yugoslav context were theoretically void of an ethnic connotation. Since the Serbian–Cyrillic language could not solely support a “claim” of national distinctiveness,⁷⁷ the symbolic value of religion,⁷⁸ ethnic genealogy and territory become significant.

The emergent perception of the Serb identity is not supportive of stereotypical appraisals of Eastern–vindictive, “bloody” and tribal–European nationalism or even Spenglerian⁷⁹ assumptions on cultural development. In fact, it approximates Kohn’s perception of “Eastern” nationalism that emphasises the importance of “ancient depth and peculiarities of its traditions”⁸⁰ a theoretical precept, which further clarifies the constitution of the Serbian nation.

I shall define the Serbian nation as an imagined community⁸¹ confined by finite boundaries, in which shared perceptions coalesce with diversity and inequality.⁸² The self-awareness of Serbianhood is springing from the dichotomy of the internal–*pure*–and an external–*polluted*–content upon which a sense of belonging is forged. Shared historical experiences, even inaccurate and falsified recollections of liminal incidents–Renan’s reference to *l’erreur historique*–further consolidate the internal cohesion. Karakasidou’s concept of *looking-glass histories*, as a “search backward over the hills and valleys of historical events to trace the inexorable route of a given population to the destiny of their national enlightenment and liberation”⁸³ is particularly relevant within the Serbian context. The national origins of *Homo Serbicus* are traced in the later medieval period,⁸⁴ a fact that confers legitimacy–apodicticity–to claims of a continuous presence in the region. The demarcation–cultural and physical–of the Serbian community revolves around the religious and linguistic medium, the latter in its “pure” ecclesiastical manifestations, which may not implicitly correspond with the administrative boundaries of the nation-state.⁸⁵ The institution of the “imagined community” is then objectified and venerated through ceremonial rites and rituals that re-narrativise and distil the fundamentals of

Serbianhood. Unity and solidarity, suffering and salvation are foregrounded, embedded and familiarised in the collective consciousness, as innate properties of the national being.

The “Fundamentalist” Discourse

On the basis of the foregoing assumptions, the Serbian collectivity could be deciphered into a largely symbolic content within which an enduring presence of the sacred is prevalent. Orthodoxy legitimates the national identity on a doctrinal/ecclesiastical level, on a social–functional or instructive–milieu, under variable circumstantial and temporal conditions. The reciprocity of a religious and socio-political context has been the point of investigation of the “fundamentalist” discourse, though, with limited references to Eastern Christianity. To that end, the broader theoretical work of Hugh Goddard and Bhikhu Parekh on the subject provide an investigative perspective, which is applicable for the elucidation of my primary hypothesis.

Fundamentalism is a vigorous attempt to use aspects of sacred tradition in readjusting the process of historicity or the capacity of a society to formulate its practices, on cultural references. It wages an “attack” on public space and culture, appropriating the mobilisation potential of the masses and captivating the social consciousness with religious imperatives. With a paucity of argumentation, fundamental values gradually replace reason. The fundamentalist movement and its ultimate potentiality depend on the events and trends within their larger societal context, underpinned by circumstances, which expose a cultural heritage and its viability, to a threat—external or internal, perceived or actual.⁸⁶ Fundamentalism is often regarded “as an anti-modern phenomenon... [an] eruption of strong traditional forces that were repressed... by modernity... —just as contemporary ethnic movements have been described as... an outbreak of... primordial forces suppressed by... the nation-states”.⁸⁷

The fundamentalist phenomenon is broadly manifested on a theological, philosophical, socio-political and historical level.⁸⁸ With regard to its theological substance, it pertains to a specific notion of the sacred origins, significance and interpretation of the scripture. Traditional perceptions of Christian fundamentalism are associated with the biblical infallibility–literalism of conservative Protestantism in America directed against the precepts of modernity.⁸⁹ Although in Christianity the scriptural content is

seen as a testament to the main revelation,⁹⁰ its “infallibility” constitutes a minority view. However, the presence of a religious sacred text or of an established hierarchy within a wider theological collection⁹¹ is an essential pre-condition for the emergence and maturation of fundamentalism.⁹²

The philosophical pretext of fundamentalism is expressed as hostility toward methodological (rational) criticism, in the appraisal of scriptural texts. In the fundamentalist context, the Scriptures are not a mere collection of sacred references and judgements. They are also “...an appeal to one community as authoritative interpreters of the pure, the sole, the ‘innerant’ sense of scripture,”⁹³ as a reflection of the divine revelation and the cosmos.

From a sociological angle, fundamentalism clearly demarcates the boundaries⁹⁴ of group membership through the imposition of a dichotomy between *true* and *nonbelievers*. The sectarian inception of Christianity and the ensuing diversity of its denominations further reaffirm this argument. In a constantly shifting environment, social or cultural capital are used to locate the “deepest” identity, and to proximate one’s “ideal” position.⁹⁵ This position is attained by the abolition of chronological distance. Alternative (selective) readings or narration of a historical lineage crystallise the boundary between an internal,⁹⁶ pure space—an enclave—and an external, polluted one. Fundamentalism resists ambiguity (an important fact, in time of radical change) by adopting a Manichean dichotomy, based on the conflict between good and evil. This tactic is dictated by perceptions of time and space, which aim at the consolidation of the community. As a historical signifier, fundamentalism emphasises the origins of faith and professes a return to its ideal foundations. In this context, it is often equated with a suspicion or even a rejection of the project of modernity, the Hegelian definition of which will further elucidate this supposition.

Hegel observed four postulates of modernity: individualism in the form of subjective freedom; the right to criticism; the autonomy of action; and a philosophy of reason, not grounded upon religious⁹⁷ precepts. These evaluative principles are of a particular importance in the analysis of the Serbian Orthodox cosmology.

Considering the political manifestations of fundamentalism, a correlation of religion and of courses of action is usually established aspiring to revolutionise society and the polity at large, in the name of the sacred. Many of the fundamentalist movements share a belief in the primacy of power, inspired by an all-encompassing religious vision of society, or sectors thereof.⁹⁸ Under these circumstances, societal reconstitution is available upon the pre-existing dichotomy of religious and social structures.

Only then could the former re-invent and transcend the latter, on the assumption that religion has an identifiable political content.⁹⁹

Of course, the fundamentalist phenomenon is not encountered—in most instances—in the concrete and archetypal form, canvassed upon the preceding observations. Importantly, certain constitutive elements can also be traced in other religious attitudes. For instance, conservatives¹⁰⁰ customarily defend an embattled traditional order and support the preservation of established institutions, including the functional demarcation of the political and religious spheres. Revivalists¹⁰¹ share a fundamentalist and anti-traditional disposition, however, they do not aspire to radically re-enact the past, by using contemporary means. Ultra-orthodoxy¹⁰² originates within practices of scriptural literalism and subsequently does not utilise the social-political referents and ambitions of fundamentalism. Millenarianism, as a collective orientation, expects imminent and total salvation,¹⁰³ but its social impact is rather limited, particularly when considered, within the fairly developed (post-communist) Serbian context.

Contrary to the previous religious positions, characterisations or references¹⁰⁴ of fundamentalism have assumed—in recent years—a political significance of their own. A number of cases are available to that end beginning, for example, with the Mujahidin in Afghanistan who were spared the “fundamentalist label”, during their period of resistance, against Soviet occupation. Their fundamentalist accolade only came about when their project of social re-construction began to materialise, including extreme forms of societal segregation for women.¹⁰⁵ The Western community is also reluctant to attribute any fundamentalist tendencies to their strategic Saudi Arabian allies,¹⁰⁶ an attitude not paralleled in the case of Iran.

These references demonstrate the inherent theoretical and symbolic complexities involved in the “fundamentalist” discourse, a phenomenon that subject to contextual circumstances and personal judgement, could be paralleled with “obscurantist, authoritarian, unthinking, reactionary, subversive, arrogant, exclusive, backward-looking, nostalgic and bigoted” religio-political practices. What this adjectival array suggests, is the sense of caution with which analysts approach and classify the fundamentalist subject.¹⁰⁷ In light of the above, I believe that the benefits emanating from the application of its theoretical discourse outweigh the derogatory character and the disadvantages of any pre-determined views. It is with this intention that I shall introduce it in the Serbian framework.

Accounting for “Fundamentalism” in Serbia

If fundamentalism solely depends upon social-political conditions,¹⁰⁸ then its potential could not be entirely disregarded in Serbia. The mobilisation of the Serbian public revolves around notions of threat to the national culture and its entailed affinitive loyalties. Images of a society gone astray provide a litany of symbols, conspiracies and villains. The insidiousness of danger operates on a broader front, appealing to instinct and the subconscious. Emotion-laden visions of a lost world or a diffused integrity consolidate support for solutions, which are reciprocal to confessional claims. For the Serbian Church, Catholicism and Islam are the visible external conspirators.¹⁰⁹

From a sociological perspective, there are also certain aspects to be considered. The Serbian modern revival is consciously aligned with both mythical elements and the current circumstances, in order to pursue the realisation of significant change. In Serbia, strictness is a source of clarity in an age of confusion. The construction of sharp symbolic and institutional paradigms,¹¹⁰—as situations demand—, is a response to the community’s problem with its boundaries. While life trajectories may correlate to different ethical responses, the Serbian Church serves as an incentive for conformity, predicated on moral suasion. The Serbian “enclave” is hence grounded in ideal structures and normative notions that exist quite independently of the actuality of human experience¹¹¹ and are considered eternal. Irreversible and involuntary changes, about which there is little or no control, are subsequently an important source of concern to Serbian Orthodoxy and society on the whole.

In addition, a temporal axis of before and after is often implied in the decipherment of the national being. The experience of history is reduced to a few key eras, which account for the glory and decline of tradition and remain intensely relevant for the present. Spiritual gnosis—the Church being the depository of Serbian existence—brings together the past and present, in conjunction with the future. In the words of Emmanuel Sivan, “the intersection of past and future grants the believer a secret road map, enabling him to comprehend from whence he comes and where he or she is headed”.¹¹² Paradigms and cognitive instruction could then be constructed, not only from a selective interpretation of a sacred heritage, but also from a shrewd mimesis of what works in the present.

However, the internal boundaries of the Serbian enclave could be described as “porous” with different aspects of tradition eliciting different

support from its adherents.¹¹³ This observation pertains to an extant dichotomy between believers and lukewarm traditionalists, a distinction reinforced by the communist secularisation, a process whose impact was limited and difficult to quantify,¹¹⁴ practised as “a superficial and ephemeral conformism”,¹¹⁵ to use the observation of Sergej Flere. In consequence, religious projects aimed at a Serbian society, which is forged on doctrinal righteousness and communally sanctioned belief, would be of limited appeal or subject to individual perceptions.

The role of the individual, as a referent of Hegelian modernity, shall further elucidate this matter. Although secular modernity does not necessarily result in an atomised existence, in its communist and Yugoslav expression it allowed for a restricted sense of individualism in the form of subjective freedom—through the fragmentation of the collective realm. It follows that most people are capable of reason, which is not always a derivative of religious precepts. On the other hand, segments of critical disposition—the Hegelian right to criticism—and the autonomy of action have suffered by the country’s political heritage. In the Serbian church, the right to criticism is reserved for matters of political or social significance, while on doctrinal grounds there is an apparent uniformity of opinion.

These common perceptions are nourished by the ecclesiastical scriptures, which delineate the sacramental and dogmatic life of the Church and theoretically entail a fundamentalist potential. Eastern Christianity has not been subjected though to such conclusions, as it is claimed¹¹⁶ that ecclesiastical authority poses inhibiting correctives in the use of allegorising exegesis.¹¹⁷ Fundamentalism presupposes a direct reciprocity between the sacraments and the congregation. Yet their strictly mediated interpretation by the Serbian clergy precludes any fundamentalist challenges, or the potential of “heretic” religious mobilisation. Under the circumstances, the term “heretic” should be understood in relation to its Greek meaning—“to choose”.¹¹⁸

According to M. E. Marty, fundamentalism occurs “on the soil of traditional cultures... in which people perceive and claim that they simply and conservatively inherit a world view and a way of life”.¹¹⁹ In Serbia, there is certainly a sense of an ancestral genealogy distilled in ecclesiastical tradition. Religious affiliation has possibly contributed to a greater extent than among other South Slav peoples in the inception and propagation of a Serbian national identity. The church’s identification with the medieval Serbian kingdom has since motivated territorial perceptions based upon historical claims. This close proximity between the national and spiritual

content further enhances the unique and non-universal character of their union. In other words, Orthodox adherence forms the core of Serbianhood.¹²⁰

However, their correlation could not be referred to as purely “fundamentalist” on either the theoretical grounds provided or their empirical application. Serbian society is respectful of its sacraments but does not perceive them as being “infallible” or beyond the scope of cautious and moderate criticism. The exclusive understanding of its membership and the prominence of tradition are not supported by a revivalist return to the early foundations of the Christian Church. Committed political actions to that end are not universally supported and more importantly, all members of the Serbian society—in itself, a moderately differentiated institution—do not hold such views.

This conclusion should not be perceived as contradictory and contrary to my hypothesis that views Orthodoxy as the sacralisation of the Serbian national collectivity. In fact, it further elucidates its thematical parameters by identifying its traditional, conservative or revivalist content and its relevance/reciprocity to the individual Serb and the consciousness of his community. A relevance which is concretised in the perception of Orthodoxy as a “living” tradition.

Conclusion

The main hypothesis of this chapter is that Orthodoxy sacralises the Serbian national identity. This assumption has been juxtaposed with the country’s societal circumstances and applied to the theoretical precepts of religion, identity/nation and fundamentalism. Through this inquiry, it has been established that religion is a very important cultural referent of the Serbian collectivity—the latter defined as an imagined community. Under the influence of social-political change and uncertainty, revivalist and traditional tendencies have surfaced, rendering Orthodoxy a diachronic signifier of Serbian fundamentals. The process, scope and depth of this union is the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

- 1 Quoted by Herrera, Hayden, *Frida: A Biography of Frida Kahlo* (London: Bloomsbury, 1998), p. 228.
- 2 *Ibid.*
- 3 In the context of this analysis, the term *sylogism* pertains to a decisive and subtle piece of reasoning, instead of the Aristotelian, deductive inference by which a conclusion is derived from two propositions—the major and the minor premise.
- 4 See Bakic, Ibrahim, *Korelacije vjere i nacije* br. 30 (Sarajevo: Tribina, 1995), p. 30.
- 5 Fundamentalism derived its name from twelve small volumes entitled *The Fundamentals*, published by anonymous authors from 1910 to 1915. Their collective work asserted the infallibility and absolute accuracy of the Bible and other basic Christian doctrines including the Virgin Birth of Jesus and His atonement for the sins of humanity through Crucifixion. See Parekh, Bhikhu, “The concept of Fundamentalism”, in Shtromas, Alexsandras (ed.), *The End of “Isms”? Reflections on the Fate of Ideological Politics after Communism’s Collapse* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), p. 114.
- 6 The subject of fundamentalism has been bibliographically approached on a general and a comparative level. In the case of the former, the treatise of Lawrence, Bruce B., *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1990) and Eisenstadt, S. N., *Fundamentalism, Sectarianism and Revolution: The Jacobin Dimension of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) are indicative of a broader approach of the fundamentalist phenomenon. On a more comparative level, the *Fundamentalist Project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, edited by Appleby, Scott R. and Marty, Martin E., *Fundamentalisms Observed, Fundamentalisms and Society, Fundamentalisms and the State, Fundamentalisms Comprehended, Accounting for Fundamentalisms* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1995), provide an extensive research on the subject, with references on most religions. In addition, Caplan, L. (ed.), *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism*, applies the fundamentalist perspective in a universal context in relation to both religious and conservative movements.
- 7 Sacralisation also makes certain key areas of collective existence taboo and hence not open to further scrutiny. These perceptions coalesce with the broader cognitive structures of society—beliefs that may vary on a local level, however, are nourished by and enmeshed within the overarching system of the sacred. See Bandic, Dusan, “Tabu kao element organizacije kulturnog vremena i prostora” in *Gradina* 6–7, Nis 1981, pp. 46–59.
- 8 This assumption paraphrases and places in the Serbian context Hans Mol’s argument that *religion is the sacralisation of identity*, a concept that pervades the entire volume of his treatise, *Identity and the Sacred: A Sketch for a New Social-Scientific Theory of Religion* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976), p. ix.
- 9 The chronological placement of the main hypothesis has thus far remained intentionally vague. With reference though to the current socio-political cir-

cumstances in Serbia, the last fifteen years are those of the greatest significance. The reason for this should be sought in the developments that followed the publication of the 1986 memorandum issued by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. The memorandum claimed that Serbia had been deliberately weakened by the Tito regime and demanded complete equality for the Serbian State. It also listed Serbian grievances both against the state and non-Serb leaders and ended by asserting the need for Serbs to create their own state. See Mihailovic, Kosta and Krestic, Vasilije, *Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Answers to Criticisms* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1995).

- 10 The Book of Genesis 1:2
- 11 See Parsons, Talcott, "Evolutionary Universals in Society" in *American Sociological Review*, Vol. XXIX, 1964, pp. 339–74.
- 12 This quotation belongs to Immanuel Kant and is cited in Roger Friedland's article on "The Political Morphology of Religious Nationalism", an unpublished conference paper presented in Rome in May 1999, p. 13.
- 13 Under the circumstances reason could make the social structures visible and thereby open to questioning. The project of Enlightenment did not, however, entirely eliminate—through rationality—the impact of sacralisation.
- 14 See Misztal, Bronislaw and Shupe, Anson, "Making Sense of the Global Revival of Fundamentalism", in Misztal, B. and Shupe, A. (eds), *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: Revival of Religious Fundamentalism in East and West* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger, 1992), p. 3.
- 15 See Rémond, René, *Religion et société en Europe: Essai sur la sécularisation des sociétés européennes aux XIX et XX siècles* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1998).
- 16 Where there was contact and social exchange—albeit of a limited scope—with the outside world (non Balkan–Ottoman), certain manifestations of an Orthodox Enlightenment were experienced in the region. Although they usually lacked the technological competence, the scientific enthusiasm and social radicalism of more advanced milieux, they were sincere in their intellectual curiosity, abhorrence of superstition and devotion to reason. The life of the Serb monk, Dositej Obranovic, is indicative of the values of anti-clericalism, reason, —based on scientific knowledge—, humanism and social emancipation. See Turczynski, E., "The Role of the Orthodox Church in Adapting and Transforming the Western Enlightenment in South-Eastern Europe" in *East European Quarterly*, Volume IX, No. 4, 1975–76, pp. 415–40; and also Sugar, Peter F., "The Enlightenment in the Balkans: Some Basic Considerations", *ibid.* pp. 499–507.
- 17 See, Schöppflin, George, *Politics in Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), p. 5.
- 18 I specifically refer to Baron d'Estournelle de Constant's introductory note—in the Carnegie Commission report on the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913—where he poses the question as to "What then is the duty of the civilised world in the Balkans?" This implies an exclusionary disposition of the latter—as a physical-cultural entity—from his appreciation of the former. His statement is cited in

- Todorova, Maria, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 4. The same question is further elaborated upon and contextualised by Allcock, John B., in *Explaining Yugoslavia* (London: Hurst & Co., 2000), p. 13.
- 19 See Eisenstadt, S. N., "The Breakdown of Communist Regimes" in *Daedalus*, Vol. 21, 1992, pp. 21–42; and Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, pp. 13–26, 351–53.
 - 20 See, Holmes, Leslie, *Post-Communism: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), pp. 38–42.
 - 21 Quoted by Habermas, Jürgen, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 2.
 - 22 *Ibid.*
 - 23 *Ibid.*
 - 24 A successful model of modernisation compensates for the ensuing cognitive distortions by providing both alternative and plausible sources of knowledge. Nationhood, as a form of solidarity does this; mass solidarity did not. In addition, the mythic-symbolic dimension of the nation was not paralleled by communist aspirations, which by relying on reduced rationalist modes, stripped out the magic and substituted nothing that was felt to be authentic.
 - 25 The Yugoslav norms of economic organisation did not differ significantly from those of other centrally planned socialist countries. Investment favoured the industrial sector while the policy of agricultural collectivisation had been invariably pursued, however, never to a doctrinal extent. Their demographic implications were manifested in migrations,—on occupational grounds—toward urban centers, in the aftermath of the disastrous collectivisation in the 1950s. In the process, villages gave way to small towns with limited manufacturing capabilities. See Waterson, Albert, *Planning in Yugoslavia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962); Davidovic, Milena, "Mobility of Population in Serbia: Results of a Research" in *Sociologija: Journal of Sociology, Social Psychology and Social Anthropology*, Vol. XXXII, 1990, pp. 126–41; Besemerer, John F., *Socialist Population Politics: The Political Implications of Demographic Trends in the USSR and Eastern Europe* (White Plains: M. E. Sharpe Inc., 1980), section on Yugoslavia.
 - 26 Popular sentiments among the Serbian people on the notion of Yugoslavism are often variable and oscillate from an emotional or lackadaisical response to the subject to an almost polemic dismissal of it. This has been my personal observation upon a number of occasions when this matter was discussed in relation to the precepts of the Serbian identity—with Serbian participants who kindly shared their views with me. While Yugoslavia was in the words of Stjepan G. Mestrovic, "a creation of various parts and treaties that were important to Western and Soviet victors, from Versailles to Yalta", I believe that current reaction to Yugoslavism is the outcome of the circumstances under which the country disintegrated, underlined by perceptions of unequal treatment. The aforementioned quotation is cited in Mestrovic, Stjepan G., *Habits of the Balkan Heart: Social Character and the Fall of Communism* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1993), p. 43.

- 27 At this stage of my analysis, the demise of Yugoslavia shall be synoptically sought in the authoritarian character of the Titoist system, the underlining differences in levels of economic development, the failure of the communist regime's nationality policy and the inherent tensions between the forces of centralisation and enhanced republicanisation. See Ramet, Sabrina Petra and Adamovic, Ljubisa S. (eds), *Beyond Yugoslavia: Politics, Economics and Culture in a Shattered Community* (Boulder: Westview Press Inc., 1993); Cohen, Leonard J., *Broken Bonds: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia* (Boulder: Westview Press Inc., 1993); Sekelj, L., *Yugoslavia: the Process of Disintegration*, translated by Vera Vukelic (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). A final appraisal on the issue shall be provided in the concluding analysis.
- 28 See Perovic, Latinka, "The Flight from Modernisation" in Popov, Nebojsa (ed.), *The Road to War in Serbia: Trauma and Catharsis* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000), pp. 109–22.
- 29 It should be emphasised that even if the communist project of secularisation had been "complete", it would still have amounted to a secularisation of Serbian Orthodoxy, leaving residues of religion that would define the Serbian thought and style. A similar process was experienced by the French people who though mainly secular (*laïcité*), continue to ascribe to religious sentiments (Catholic or Protestant).
- 30 On the concept of populism, see the treatise on the subject by Held, Joseph (ed.), *Populism in Eastern Europe: Racism, Nationalism and Society* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1996). The chapter by Dragnich, Alex N., "Populism in Serbia" is of particular significance, framing the "populist" phenomenon within the country's historical context, pp. 219–43.
- 31 I specifically refer to popular beliefs, which generally identify the Balkan region and Serbia (in particular) as the recipient/subject of conspiracies—in the form of policies aimed deliberately against Serbian interests—formulated in remote and foreign centers of power and decision-making. While the impact of the so-called "Great Powers" in the region is a historical fact, their extent and scope remains a matter of debate. References to a pre-determined course of history, beyond the control of the people concerned, is in itself an important aspect of Serbian populism. More importantly, it reduces the institution of society and that of the Serbian polity on the whole, to a passive agent, hence undermining the country's democratic project. On the influence of the "Great Powers" in the region see Glenny, Misha, *The Balkans 1804–1999: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers* (London: Granta Books, 2000), *passim*.
- 32 It is not my intention to "reduce" religion to a single populist discourse. However, its adaptability in given historical conditions, the anthropocentric bias, observable in the case of Christianity and the desirability of a direct relationship with its communal basis, entail broad populist precepts. See Ionescu, Ghita and Gellner, Ernest, *Populism: Its Meaning and National Characteristics* (Letchworth: The Garden City Press Ltd., 1969), in particular the chapter by Edward Shils.
- 33 Quoted by Lukes, Steven, *Power: A Radical View* (Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1974), p. 22. The excerpt is taken from Marx, Karl and Engels,

- Friedrich, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" in Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), Vol. I, p. 247.
- 34 The Serbian peoples are not necessarily aware of their nation's historical contribution(s) to the demise of the Byzantine Empire. These included Tsar Dusan's attack on Byzantium, which resulted to an Ottoman involvement in the support of the latter, or the Serbian collaboration with the Turks in certain battles. See Clark, Victoria, *Why Angels Fall: A Journey through Orthodox Europe from Byzantium to Kosovo*, p. 76.
- 35 Experience is interpreted in accordance with the argument essayed by traditions. Tradition, in ecclesiastical terms "...would appear as something added, as an external principle in relation to Scripture". Quoted by Lossky, Vladimir, "Tradition and Traditions" in Ouspensky, Leonid and Lossky, Vladimir, *The Meaning of Icons* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982), p. 11.
- 36 Quoted by Castoriadis, Cornelius, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), pp. 388–89. Hegel's quotation forms a part of his treatise, *Jenaer Realphilosophie (1805–6)* (Berlin: Akad. Verlag, 1969).
- 37 See Lukes, Steven, *Power: A Radical View*, pp. 16–20.
- 38 See Bandic, Dusan, *Carstvo zemaljsko i carstvo nebesko*, *passim*.
- 39 Quoted by the *Collins English Dictionary*, p. 1233.
- 40 *Ibid*.
- 41 An interesting dichotomy between functional and substantive definitions of religion—what religion does and is accordingly—is introduced and elaborated upon in McGuire, Meredith B., *Religion: the Social Context*, fourth edition (Belmond: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997), pp. 8–14.
- 42 *Ibid*.
- 43 Quoted by Geertz, Clifford, "Religion as a Cultural System" in Banton, M. (ed.), *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion* (London: Tavistock, 1966), p. 4.
- 44 This dichotomy is introduced by Ferré, Frederick, *Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967), p. 73.
- 45 *Ibid*, pp. 86–89.
- 46 *Ibid*, p. 73.
- 47 Quoted by Capps, Walter Holden, *Religion*, in the World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia (Chicago: World Book Inc., 1999), p. 2.
- 48 "Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer" is the original proclamation of Voltaire's defense of God, quoted by Davies, Norman, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 601.
- 49 See Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London: Fontana Press, 1993), pp. 88–93.
- 50 See Douglas, Mary, *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 75.
- 51 Quoted by Feuerbach, Ludwig, *The Essence of Christianity* translated by George Eliot (New York and London: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), p. 185.
- 52 This excerpt is quoted by Scharf, Betty R., in *The Sociological Study of Relig-*

- ion (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1970), p. 56–57. Malinowski's definition of religion is cited in Huxley, J. (ed.), *Science and Religion: A Symposium*, 1931.
- 53 See Radcliffe-Brown, "Religion and Society", in *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXXV, 1945.
- 54 Quoted by Berger, Peter L., *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990), p. 87.
- 55 The subject of functionalism has a complicated ancestry, as its inspiration is drawn from a variety of sources—for example, religious values or attitudes may be viewed as explanatory avenues of economic and political patterns (Weber). The critique of functionalism has proceeded along two lines. From a primarily methodological perspective it is viewed as reductive and as obscuring the value of the state or political institutions. It has also been attacked as concerned only with the maintenance of order and thus not suitable to the analysis of change. In response, the constructivist approach recognises the state as "the principle unit of analysis for international political theory", emphasizing its corporate identity and interests. Constructivist attitudes render humanity instrumental in its perception of reality, which reduces the importance of hierophanies and archetypal intuitions. However, reality itself is a conceptual element within the existential situation of the individual, the direct experience of which may reside beyond our empirical senses. Considering the complexity of the sacred—in particular its doctrinal content—a moderate functionalist scheme appears to approximate the most, the analytical context of my hypothesis. See Malinowski, B., *A Scientific Theory of Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944); Melzer, A. M., "The Origin of the Counter-Enlightenment: Rousseau and the New Religion of Sincerity" in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, No. 2, June 1996, pp. 344–60; and Wendt, A., "Collective Identity Formation and the International State" in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2, June 1994, pp. 384–96.
- 56 This quotation is cited in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th edition, 1926, Suppl. Vol. 1, pp. 132–33, and forms part of the article on the subject of culture.
- 57 This particular definition of religion is quoted by Ferré, Frederick, *Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion*, p. 69.
- 58 Societal references of unity beyond the religious domain do of course exist. The extent and scope of secularisation determines their prominence in society. However, as already suggested, in Serbia the project of secularisation has not been completed and this renders religion a significant referent of collective subjectivity.
- 59 My syllogism is based on a proposition advanced by Mary Douglas in which she examines the correlation between the "absence" of religion and personal conduct. See Douglas, Mary, *Implicit Meanings*, p. 76.
- 60 See Durkheim, Emile, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1954).
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 62 *Ibid.*, p. 382.

- 63 Quoted by Florovsky, George, *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View*, Vol. I (Vaduz: Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1987), p. 59.
- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 In the Orthodox Church, one enters the faith through “baptism”, which is also a rite of membership in the nation. This would be particularly the case in Greece, where this form of “spiritual birth” proceeded without interruption, as opposed to the respective Serbian and Russian experiences. This aspect of communalism could also be traced in the alliance between Catholicism and Irish or Polish nationhood or Presbyterianism and the Scottish sense of identity. In all of these cases, social relations may be hindered, though are not made impossible on the basis of religious affinity. See Scharf, Betty R., *The Sociological Study of Religion*, pp. 42–44; and Meerson, Michael A., “The Doctrinal Foundation of Orthodoxy” in Ramet, Pedro (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988), p. 21.
- 66 Moral principles could be fashioned by a number of social institutions (for example, the educational and judicial systems). In an Orthodox Christian society, however, the Church would be the obvious point of reference. My assumption is based on arguments introduced by Mary Douglas, on the more general function and prominence of social institutions.
- 67 Quoted by Douglas, Mary, *How Institutions Think* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), p. 120.
- 68 Eliade has differentiated modern from traditional humanity: “by this term (traditional cultures) we mean any culture, whether ethnographic or literate, which is governed in its entirety by norms whose religious or cosmological validity is not doubted by any members of the community” (*Barabadur, the Symbolic Temple*, first published in 1937.) quoted in Apostolos-Cappadona, Diane V., (ed.), *Symbolism, the Sacred and the Arts* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), p. 131, n. 1.
- 69 On this basis, certain traits of the Serbian peoples are signaled out as distinct (characteristic) and the possession of these “qualities” and the judgement that they are good are confirmed by tradition. The mythopoeic element in tradition is immediately called upon to create or to restate historical events so that they will seem to be instances of these traits.
- 70 See Runciman, S., *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State* (Auckland University Press, 1971), p. 14.
- 71 The gradual withdrawal of religious precepts from the social structures of a secular—or in the process of secularisation—community, could be experienced without the loss of private faith. An increase in private faith is not, however, reciprocal to a decrease of public—ceremonial and ritualistic—manifestations of religion.
- 72 By dogmatic definitions, I refer to the strict interpretation of, for example, ecclesiastical rules of conduct and/of membership. In both cases, there are religiously “sanctioned” expectations placed upon both the individual and the community on the whole, which are particularly relevant under conditions of societal uncertainty and confusion.

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- 73 Personal identity rests upon a multitude of sources and categories, located in perceptions of the family, sex, the sacred and the profane, feelings and science among others. See Klapp, Orrin E., *Collective Search for Identity* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 146.
- 74 See Schöpflin, George, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe* (London: Hurst and Company, 2000), pp. 29–30.
- 75 These identity forming processes are reciprocally potentiating and mutually reinforcing, once they have been set on a course of engagement. When they function together, they can reproduce a very powerful context of naturalised loyalties.
- 76 See Gellner, Ernest, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983). On the subject of the national identity as a derivative of state sanctioned social, political and economic processes in the Balkans, see Karakasidou, Anastasia N., *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia (1870–1990)* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997).
- 77 In spite of contemporary claims to the contrary, which attribute an ethnic uniqueness to the Serbian language, it is my view that the linguistic medium has been one of the first “political casualties” of the Yugoslav crisis. In fact, the institution of language has served as a means to legitimate and support the cause of national independence. Although processes of linguistic Darwinism have since contributed to the enhancement of dialectical differences, it is within the nationalistic rhetoric that these become ethnically significant. By linguistic Darwinism, I refer to an involuntary evolutionary process in which political elites determine the scope for change in a way that environmental and genetic factors do in the original theory.
- 78 The correlation between religious and national identity in the Balkans was further consolidated by the *millet* system. See Arnakis, E. “The role of religion in the development of Balkan nationalism” in Jelavich, Charles and Barbara (eds.), *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and Politics Since the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), pp. 115–44.
- 79 See Mestrovic, Stjepan G., *Habits of the Balkan Heart*, pp. 91–107.
- 80 Quoted by Kohn, Hans, “Western and Eastern Nationalism” in Hutchinson, John and Smith, Anthony D. (eds.), *Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 164.
- 81 For the definition of the nation as an “imagined community”, see Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).
- 82 A concise discussion of various theoretical interpretations on nationalism, including Anderson’s findings, is provided by McCrone, David, *The Sociology of Nationalism: Tomorrow’s Ancestors* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 1–21.
- 83 Quoted by Karakasidou, Anastasia N., *Fields of Wheat*, p. 17.
- 84 See Allcock, J. B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, pp. 317–21.
- 85 I specifically allude to the dislocation of Serbian populations from Krajina, Bosnia and Kosovo, areas perceived as part of the national, spatial/temporal and historical construct.

- 86 See Parekh, Bhikhu, "The Concept of Fundamentalism", pp. 113–21.
- 87 Quoted by Eisenstadt S. N., "Fundamentalism, Phenomenology, and Comparative Dimensions", in Marty, M. E. and Appleby, R. S. (eds.), *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, The Fundamentalist Project, Vol. 5, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 259.
- 88 See Goddard, Hugh, *Christians and Muslims: From Double Standards to Mutual Understanding* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1995), pp. 153–66.
- 89 See Mencken, Henry L., *American Mercury* (October, 1925), *passim*.
- 90 See Goddard, H., *Christians and Muslims*, p. 154.
- 91 See Parekh, B., "The Concept of Fundamentalism", pp. 123–24.
- 92 In the absence of sacred texts, entrenched ritual practices do not suffice for the emergence of fundamentalist proclivities. Considering the innate diversity of societal norms and values, the presence of a scripture confers the necessary referent for the convergence of variable perceptions, in the pursuance of a stipulative (fundamental) identity.
- 93 This definition of the meaning of scripture is quoted by Lawrence, Bruce B., *Defenders of God*, pp. 5–6.
- 94 See Parekh, B., "The Concept of Fundamentalism", p. 114.
- 95 See Simpson, John H., "Fundamentalism in America Revisited: The Fading of Modernity as a Source of Symbolic Capital", in Misztal, B. and Shupe, A. (eds.), *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*.
- 96 Within the internally "pure" space, a further distinction between core and periphery, the guardians of the tradition and "modernists" would be necessary. This distinction is also important in the study of the Serbian "enclave".
- 97 On Hegel's reflection on modernity see Habermas, Jürgen, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, pp. 1–74.
- 98 On the primacy of politics in Islamic fundamentalist movements, see Bassam, Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988).
- 99 See Parekh, B., "The Concept of Fundamentalism", p. 124.
- 100 *Ibid*, p. 121.
- 101 *Ibid*, p. 122.
- 102 *Ibid*.
- 103 See Bastide, Roger, *Messianisme et développement économique et sociale* (Cahiers internationaux de sociologie, 1961), 31, pp. 3–14.
- 104 See Juergensmeyer, Mark, "Response to Munson: Fundaphobia—the Irrational Fear of Fundamentalism", *Contention*, 5:3, Spring 1996, pp. 127–32. Juergensmeyer advances the view that the fundamentalist term has become a political instrument whose impact is comparable to the use of communism in the West (p. 128).
- 105 See Goddard, H., *Christians and Muslims*, p. 156.
- 106 *Ibid*, p. 157.
- 107 An interesting debate on the terminology of fundamentalism—stemming from the unease with which contributors applied the term—is developed by Marty, Martin E. and Appleby, Scott R., "Introduction" in Marty, M. E. and Appleby, Scott R. (eds.), *Accounting for Fundamentalism: The Dynamic Character of*

- Movements* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 8–9. Their conclusions reaffirm the validity of the “fundamentalist” term based on the inconclusive nature of alternatives—orthodoxy or orthopraxis—and its established cognitive and analytical attributes.
- 108 My analysis of the circumstances and context of fundamentalism has been largely influenced by Martin E. Marty’s study of the “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism” in Kaplan, Lawrence (ed.), *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), pp. 15–23.
- 109 The origins of the Yugoslav crisis are often related with the role of the Roman Catholic Church. This assessment has been adopted by a considerable section of the Serbian public. Similar conspiracy theories deal with the Muslim element in Bosnia and Kosovo.
- 110 See Douglas, Mary, *Purity and Danger* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1996).
- 111 Indeed, in this matrix the actuality is irrelevant if not harmful and it could be dismissed as a single instance—exception without a symbolic underpinning, hence with no significance.
- 112 Quoted by Emmanuel Sivan, “The Enclave Culture” in Marty, M. E. and Appleby, R. S. (eds.), *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, Vol. 5, p. 39.
- 113 Southern Serbia and Kosovo are regarded as the bastions of ecclesiastical tradition. Support for the Orthodox Church is also considerable in Republika Srpska and among its residents, with geographical distance from the centre of the “enclave” being an obvious factor. “Lukewarm” traditionalists are to be found in the northern—secular—periphery of the enclave.
- 114 On the subject of religious revivalism in Yugoslavia and the research problems encountered—in the absence of reliable statistical data—see Ramet, Sabrina Petra, *Balkan Babel: Politics, Culture and Religion in Yugoslavia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), p. 140.
- 115 Quoted by Flere, Sergej, “Denominational Affiliation in Yugoslavia, 1931–1987” in *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No 2, June 1991, p. 163.
- 116 This argument is supported by the biblical scholar James Barr, in *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia, 1977/78) and Alexandru Dutu, in his article “Y-a-t-il une Europe Orthodoxe?” in *Sud-Estul si Contextul European*, Buletin VII (Academia Română: 1997).
- 117 The use of allegorising exegesis is correlated with the conduct of the Greek Orthodox Church, which invokes both ecclesiastical and scriptural authority.
- 118 See Berger, Peter, *The Heretical Imperative: Contemporary Possibilities of Religious Affirmation* (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1979), pp. 22–27.
- 119 Quoted by Marty, M. E., “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism”, p. 18.
- 120 This is a rather closed system of thought, with effective boundary “control” mechanisms to screen out “alien” influences, hence distributing ideas and self-reproducing successfully. Some of this success should be attributable to the failed modernisation of communism and to the half-conscious reliance by the Yugoslav leadership on ritualistic practices, which were calqued on Orthodoxy and were mirror images of it.

CHAPTER TWO

ORTHODOXY AND SERBIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

“BLESSED IS THE NATION THAT PROFESSES ONE AND THE SAME FAITH.”¹

*“Just as my sweet Orthodoxy did reside forever
within my mother, so shall it reside forever
within me and those who come after me.”*
Milos Tsernianski, *Migrations*

Synopsis: *The general purpose in this chapter is to further assess the main hypothesis—Orthodoxy is the sacralisation of the Serbian national identity—by concretely investigating the interaction between the Orthodox religious “organisation” and the Serbian national content. In the process, I attempt to answer the question as to how religion contributed to the formation of a national consciousness, of an “awareness and acceptance of similar attitudes and beliefs, linked to a common style of life...”² This tangible set of shared identifications is closely related to situational and cultural factors, which shape group formation and ethnic identity. I shall argue that Orthodoxy reinforces a Serbian ethno-religious identity, which depends on particular forms of commitment and meaning. Orthodoxy’s path of influence and intervening nature obviates the elucidation of two related issues: the dialectics of integration and differentiation and spatial-temporal continuity.*

It should be emphasised that this analysis is based upon certain terminological assumptions. The concept of Orthodoxy will incorporate both specific doctrinal elements with broader functional and sociological manifestations of a monotheistic religion. Time and space are respectively determined by the ecclesiastical calendar and the “geography of faith”.³ In conclusion, the Serbian national-collective entity shall be considered as both a symbolic-expressive and an instrumental-functional social unit.

Introduction

In untangling this complicated subject it will be helpful to resort to a simplified schema, founded upon the following point of departure: that religion—Serbian Orthodoxy, in this particular context—defines man and his

place in the universe. In order to function effectively, it is essential that a person or group have a precisely focused and systematically conceived definition of its environment and of itself. Such a definition of the system and the cosmos to which it is related is a conception of identity. Orthodoxy can be understood only as an integrated system of thought, logically sound and epistemologically valid, which provides the most general set of instructions, as to how the system is to maintain itself and repair any damage sustained. In consequence, an attempt will be made to approach Orthodoxy as the “sacralisation” of the Serbian identity, a system of ideas about the substance and ultimate structure of Serbian reality.

The cumulated argument of my treatise is centred upon the proposition that “a Serb without faith is not a ‘real’ Serb”.⁴ This “fusion” of the religious with the ethnic culminates into a Serbian identity founded purely upon religious criteria of differentiation. My analysis shall commence with the appraisal of the doctrinal and the functional—psychological and social—(*cultus*) content of Orthodoxy.⁵ The former includes references of ecclesiastical law and theological assumptions and the latter incorporates a variety of ethical practices and rites, by which the religiosity of a collectivity is expressed. Both dimensions will be respectively considered in relation to the appeal and enticement of the Orthodox option.

The “Doctrinal” Content of Orthodoxy

The functional significance of religion is attributed to its capacity to locate the individual—as member of a collective—in a cosmology; to account for the human condition and its experiences—variable in structure and content—; identify related problems and through their interpretation provide possible answers and solutions. “Being made in God’s image” involves the power to love—in the volitional, not the emotional sense of the term—oneself and others and to accordingly translate this principle into social action(s), as these are individually and collectively perceived. Through divine providence, the process of history is real and one-dimensional (not cyclical) leading towards the Kingdom of God. God’s foreseeing protection and concern for his creatures has been historically manifested in real times and places, as an otherwise unattainable wisdom. Religious knowledge⁶ is partly found, according to K. E. Yandell, in “revelation rather than through reflection, meditation, self-abasement, or the like”.⁷ Appropriately, the religious experience of worship is located in the non-dissolvable distinc-

tion between the Creator and the creature and is experienced through the dependence of the latter on the former.

Orthodoxy's tradition, experience and doctrine, also emphasise the role of the Creator and Providence on whom all else depends, a theological supposition that is adhered to with absolute fidelity.

The absolute fidelity to the Tradition, piety and principles of the early, undivided Church are the defining precepts and the very essence of Orthodoxy.⁸ To be Orthodox purports to a "true doctrine" or a "right belief" in other words, to a perception of authority and of credence as truth. The term was canvassed in defence of the power and dignity of the "true doctrine" against heretic appraisals, which persisted in the formative centuries. The Greek adjective *Ortho(s)* professes that someone or something is correct, right or true while *doxa*, from the verb *doxazo*, means to believe, to glorify and to hold an opinion.

Orthodoxy should be hence understood as a body of tradition and faith, a collectivity of theological propositions, formulated into precise doctrinal assumptions, which have preserved their absolute integrity in spite of the changes, innovations and re-interpretations that took place within Christianity. This performative enactment of the past, springing from references to the Church of ancient times and the original apostolic faith produces a sense of living continuity and changelessness,⁹ which is expressed in the lives of the saints, in ecclesiastical worship and in the faith of the Orthodox communion. Orthodoxy ultimately emanates from a just perception that what a man believes, knows and thinks is supremely determinative of his demeanour and his cosmology.

The Orthodox expression of faith is a derivative of the formal statements on the essential articles of Christian belief, as these were concretised by the seven—initial—general councils.¹⁰ The Orthodox Church recognises as ecumenical the councils of Nicaea I (325), Constantinople I (381), Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451), Constantinople II (681), and Nicaea II (787) in conjunction with subsequent councils¹¹ that supported similar doctrinal assumptions. Upon their ecclesiastical conclusions, organisational principles had crystallised and the doctrinal significance of the Trinity and of the Incarnation was re-affirmed.¹² In this context, the uninterrupted life of the liturgy—"Christianity is a liturgical religion and the Church is first of all a worshipping community"¹³—of the scriptural references and tradition provide additional sources for the expression of belief and ultimately for the gnosis of truth. It is through the communal—socialising—nature of the Church, of which Scriptural assumptions

are normative expressions, that truth is rendered accessible to the believer. The religious dimension of truth is customarily associated with the teachings of the “church fathers”.¹⁴ However, in Orthodoxy, its enduring experience—as accepted knowledge,¹⁵ which does not require an additional justification—originates in the membership of the ecclesiastical and sacramental collectivity.

The Creation of Man in the “Image and Likeness of God”¹⁶

The dialectics of the relationship
between creator and creature

As it has already been asserted, the relation between the Creator and the creature is clearly demarcated by an ordered dichotomy—whose ignorance is blasphemous—reiterating the dependence of the latter, on the former.¹⁷ The anthropocentric and transcendental character of Orthodoxy revolves around the union of the subject (person) with the physical¹⁸ and the metaphysical creation. This point should not be equated with the abasement of the individual into an “irrational” being, but it is rather indicative of his predisposition to achieve self-fulfilment or efficacy, in a *communio in sacris*. The ultimate destiny and natural state of Man, is solely comprehended through the divine prototype of God. “All creatures are balanced upon the creative word of God, as if upon a bridge of diamond; above them is the abyss of the divine infinitude, below them that of their own nothingness.”¹⁹ Under these circumstances, human freedom is not attainable within the physical and material limitations of the world, but experienced through our communion with God. This enables the human being to accomplish the divine image and likeness upon which he had been conceived, to be “assimilated through virtue”²⁰—according to John Damascene.

In the Orthodox faith a sense of synergy permeates the organic fellowship with God, manifested in the co-operation of “two unequal, but equally necessary forces: divine grace and human will”.²¹ Every single member of the Orthodox collectivity—the Greek term *ecclesia* connotes an assembly and a gathering of adherents to the faith—is in direct communion with Christ. This notion of “togetherness” reflects the spatial and temporal continuity of the sacramental communion, based on a measure of freedom and personal responsibility, in the preservation and propagation of the Church’s collective subjectivity. The unity and authority of the Orthodox

Church, its *sobornost*,²² is in the words of Khomiakov, “accomplished on earth without losing its essential characteristics”.²³

However, the free will—perceived, as a Manichean dichotomy between good and evil—with which Man was originally invested, did not preclude the possibility of “falling away” from His Creator. The separation from God and the ensuing deprivation of mankind from its natural glory—“the best icon of God is the human person”²⁴—is experienced through a life in sin; a new state of being, whose most unnatural aspect is manifested in disease and death. Man inherits at birth his own mortality from his *original sin*, a fact that leads him to strive for self-affirmation and fight for his survival throughout life.²⁵ The liberation of humanity from this vicious circle is affirmed in the death and resurrection of Christ and completed in the sacramental life of the Church and in Baptism.

In consequence of the *original sin*, Western Christianity²⁶ has particularly pronounced the impairment of human nature from its initial conception—in the image and likeness of God. An autonomous perception of man’s nature persists, forgiveness is bestowed upon through grace and sin is a crime worthy of punishment. By contrast, Orthodoxy supports the theological view that sin may obscure but ultimately does not destroy the “divine image”. The binary of this perception is founded upon a different interpretation of humanity’s condition before its fall and of the proceeding implications.²⁷ Man’s participation in, or rather the communion with God enables him to fulfil the premises of his destiny. In this context, God and Man meet once more, rendering a personal experience of divine life, even the eschatological aim of theosis²⁸—of deification²⁹—possible. The very existence and historical purpose of the ecclesiastical body is hence fulfilled, which according to Christos Yannaras pertains to “on the one side the truth of the fall and on the other, the truth of the deification of man”.³⁰

The Triune God—Father, Son and the Holy Spirit

The foundations of the Orthodox faith are forged upon the belief in one God, in three Persons.³¹ Orthodoxy considers the tri-personality of God³²—Father, Son and the Holy Spirit—as a principal fact of the Christian doctrine, whereby three distinctive and diverse hypostases are united in one substance (the Greek concept of *ousia*, that is the equivalent of essence) of activity and will. This theological assertion identifies the Father as “the

origin, source, and cause of Godhead, born from none and proceeding from none. The son is born of the Father from all eternity; the Spirit proceeds from the father from all eternity".³³ The theological distinction between a divine Essence as a whole and the various hypostases enables the ecclesiastical body to provide a description (an elucidation) for the revelatory experience of the Creator.

This complicated belief becomes clearer when we consider a more simplified schema³⁴ in which Man—created in the image of God—is one substance with a plenitude of diverse hypostases. In this context, we may identify a multitude of human properties including reason, recollection, consideration, imagination, resolution and thought among others that are all attributed and united in the one substance of Man. These properties or common traits in being are to be found in the life of everyone, in other words, we all share the same *ousia*. At the same time, each human existence has an absolute and unique essence, manifested in the non-recurring form of these common ways.

The hypostasis of the Son, *born of the Father from all eternity*, is of particular theological importance for the Orthodox Church.³⁵ Orthodoxy renounces any doctrinal belief that subordinates the Son to the Father (Arianism); any dogmas that emphasise the autonomy of Christ's human and divine natures (Nestorianism); and finally, beliefs that solely attribute to Christ a divine nature (monophysitism or monotheism).³⁶ Orthodox Christology emphasises the identity of Christ as the Creator's pre-existent Son. The fullness of Christ's humanity is not only rendered real in itself but also for God, (Christ must be fully God) for the reason that His sacrifice also brought Him to death on the cross and consequently humanity's redemption and salvation is accomplished by God alone. Christ "became completely like His brothers" (2:16–17), "experienced death for all mankind" (2:9), "was raised from death by God" (13:20) and "opened for us a living opening through... His body" (Hebrews 10:19).³⁷ The ecclesiastical consideration of salvation is then emanating from the union of the divine and human natures through which weakness and mortality is overcome and humankind is elevated to divine life. The doctrine of Christ's divine Person is also reflected in the Orthodox doctrine of Mary—Mariological doctrine³⁸—venerating *Theotokos*, as she is His mother, in flesh.³⁹

Humankind's return to its original state is ensued through the third Person of the Triune God, the Holy Spirit. The role of the Holy Spirit, as the main agent of man's restoration, constitutes an integral aspect of the Orthodox sacramental and liturgical ritual. The Holy Spirit is invoked at

the beginning of the main sacraments and every act of worship commences with a prayer to the Spirit. The “ultimate” mystery of the presence of the Son is attributed to the descent of the Spirit upon the ecclesiastical congregation. “The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name... and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you”.⁴⁰ The theological presence of the Spirit is particularly prevalent in the Eucharistic liturgies and the Eucharistic bread and wine.

Any account of the Orthodox Triune God is incomplete without a reference to His transcendent and unknowable essence—this being a significant doctrinal precept of Eastern Christianity. An apophatic exegesis enables the worshipper to approximate the knowledge of the Creator, in terms of what He is not. It follows that statements about God’s mercy or wisdom are insufficient in designating the nature of our communion with Him. The comprehension and awareness of “truth”, through the apophatic theology, “ascends from the inferior degrees of being to the highest, by progressively setting aside all that can be known, in order to draw near to the Unknown”.⁴¹

However, the apophatic way of Orthodox theology should not be equated with agnosticism. The interpretation of religious dogmas—as parameters of truth—is experienced in the usage of ecclesiastical symbols, images and language, which result to an internal sense of understanding rather than knowledge in the form of speculations on abstract concepts.⁴² More importantly, God is revealed by His acts or energies in the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Hence, the human appreciation of the Creator originates in religious reverence, participation in the acts or “energies” bestowed upon creation and in the *communio in sacris*.⁴³

The “Functional”—*Cultus*—Content of Orthodoxy

Orthodoxy is sacramentally constructed upon the Creator’s spiritual presence in the ecclesiastical congregation. The direct communion of the worshipper with God creates a sense of communal conscience and social responsibility,⁴⁴ manifested in enduring moral precepts and rules of conduct—perceived as a direct referent of a life in Christ. In consequence, Orthodoxy maintains an inherent living continuity, a measure of stability and cohesion, in spite of changes encountered to her historical conditions and forms over the years. This sense of living continuity is summated in the Orthodox concept of Tradition.

Orthodoxy's Tradition is concretised within the totality of the doctrinal assumptions, worshipping practices and iconography, the Creeds and spirituality, which encapsulate her transcending nature—not to be equated with a mere permanence of rites and memory.⁴⁵ The Orthodox Tradition is a chronological reference to the life of the Church, in an intertwined interpretation of her past and present. It is the knowledge of truth revealed in the decisions of the Ecumenical councils and experienced, in space and time, within the ecclesiastical body. Ultimately, it is the abiding divine presence and sense of unity and obligation—an inner law of the Church—arising from the shared eternal faith and convictions of the worshipping congregation.⁴⁶

The Role of the Orthodox Liturgy

Orthodoxy's living continuity and identity is "subjectified" within the context of the ecclesiastical liturgy, which incorporates her spiritual and theological suppositions into the right belief and worship—this being her initial definitional interpretation. The role of the Orthodox liturgy emphasises the authentic, collective character of the Church—for religious gnosis is not individually "confined"—and places each worshipper in the human-divine communion. It is in the continuous, liturgical expression of the Church that Orthodoxy finds significance—a consideration springing from the belief that the human nature is primarily liturgical,⁴⁷ on an aesthetic, emotional or intellectual level.

This holistic religious experience is amplified and elaborated in the ecclesiastical hymnology, the doxological literature, formal theological assumptions, visual—iconography—or symbolic forms, which convey the content of the dogmatic faith to the educated and non-educated, to the clergy and the laity.⁴⁸ Liturgical participation contributes to the cohesion of the ecclesiastical body, through the application of familiar references, which are forged on the particular cultural and historical origins of the church. This sense of liturgical familiarity is further consolidated by the introduction of vernacular languages. In fact, Orthodoxy's preservation in the Balkans—during the centuries of Ottoman rule—may be attributed to the ecclesiastical liturgies,⁴⁹ values and knowledge, condensed in time⁵⁰ and space.

Orthodoxy's liturgical and ceremonial structures were formally shaped and influenced by the scriptural origins and traditions of the Byzantine

Court.⁵¹ In the absence of a central ecclesiastical authority—responsible for the introduction of universally binding reforms—the Orthodox liturgical content often appears to be rather conservative. This sense of changelessness⁵² emanates from the firm conviction of the congregation that the liturgy provides a medium through which the experience of the Heavenly Kingdom⁵³ is conveyed. Nonetheless, since a variety of liturgical traditions were incorporated in the early Church, the Orthodox community accepts either the possibility or the actuality of diverse liturgical forms.⁵⁴

The “Normative” Expressions of Orthodoxy:

The role of the sacraments

The synergetic and co-operative character of man’s fellowship with God is realised through participation in the ecclesiastical sacraments or *mysteria*. The selection of the Greek concept mystery (*mysterion*–*mysteria*) in the description of these religious experiences does not pertain to an intended or reductive effort to interpret them in terms of obscure, abstract, or enigmatic phenomena. On the contrary, this term is indicative of the dynamic and encompassing nature of the worshipping congregation, which is not solely definable by empirical phenomenology, scientific language and the relative understanding of perceptive–material–symbols.⁵⁵

The Orthodox sacraments are personal experiences,⁵⁶ which emphasise individual participation⁵⁷ within the Church, upon which the knowledge and possibilities of life are then rendered attainable. The “entire” life of the worshipper is—in itself—a preparation for the receipt of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the Orthodox sacramental acts are the “prayer” of an anticipating congregation. These prayers reveal the external and internal substance of the Church, whereby every single believer participates in both the physical-bodily and the metaphysical-spiritual sense. This union is further reflected by the functional incorporation of material elements such as wine, oil and bread that are transformed into spiritual signifiers, emanating from the Orthodox appreciation, conferred to the material content of the sacraments.⁵⁸

The organic enrolment of the Orthodox congregation revolves around seven specific sacramental acts: Baptism, Chrismation (the Orthodox *mysterion* of Confirmation), the Eucharist, Repentance or Confession,⁵⁹ Holy Orders,⁶⁰ Anointing of the Sick⁶¹ and Marriage.⁶² Their exact, “numerical” definition—they are the same as those recognised by the Roman Catholic

theology—originates neither from an Ecumenical council's decision nor pertains to doctrinal perceptions. The number seven was generally accepted by the seventeenth century,⁶³ against the growing prominence of the Reformation. In this context it should be noted that the sacramental acts of Baptism and the Eucharist are of particular hierarchical importance within Orthodoxy and that the sacramental nature of the Church often incorporates additional acts including burial rituals or the anointing of a monarch.⁶⁴

Baptism and Chrismation

Participation—membership—in the Orthodox collectivity is confirmed for each worshipper through the sacrament of Baptism.⁶⁵ At Baptism a believer is formally integrated into the human-divine communion—in a physical and a spiritual regeneration—by a threefold immersion in and emersion from water, in the name of the Holy Trinity. This symbolic enactment of rebirth reiterates the belief that ecclesiastical membership is not limited to the adherence of theological axioms and precepts but also involves the physical/bodily hypostasis of the faithful, in the revelation of God's love. Through this rebirth, Man is “reconstituted” in an organic fellowship with the Triune God and the venerated saints.⁶⁶

The use of water in the *mysterion* of Baptism represents a sign of voluntary burial through immersion—emulating Christ's sacrifice—and a restoration into an essentially new existence that is not subject to decay, in an implied belief, in the “ultimate” resurrection. In this context, the water as the endowed source of purification, is a symbol and referent to the constitutive origins of life.

In Orthodoxy, Baptism is immediately followed by Chrismation—confirmation—performed by the anointing of the newly baptised with aromatic oil (Holy Chrism)—in a similar manner to the Kings of Israel, in the Old Testament. The baptised child—Orthodox Baptism takes place in infancy⁶⁷—is chrismated by marking the various parts of the body with the sign of the Cross.⁶⁸ In this way, the membership of the ecclesiastical communion is sealed in the personal presence of the Holy Spirit that now becomes an innate part of the worshipper's hypostasis. These initiatory sacraments are concluded with the Holy Communion, further reiterating the positive impact of the *mysteria*, as the beginning of an existence supported by the Eucharist.

The Eucharist

The *mysterion* of the Eucharist constitutes the core of the Orthodox liturgical cycles. The Eucharistic liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and of St. Basil the Great are those most frequently used by the Orthodox Church—the former during weekends and the latter ten times a year. In addition, the Eucharistic liturgies of St James—once annually—and of the Presanctified—on Wednesdays and Fridays during the Lent and on the first three days of the Holy Week⁶⁹—form a part of the Orthodox ecclesiastical calendar.

The theological and scriptural origins of this sacramental act emanate from Christ's sacrifice and the dogma of Christology, which permeate Eastern Christianity. The Eucharist is essentially a "meal", in other words, the receipt by the worshipping congregation of the Body and Blood of Christ, the culminating point of which lies in the invocation of the Holy Spirit for the completion of the sacramental change. The sacrament reiterates the Orthodox conviction that the ecclesiastical body is a unique *mysterion*, of which the Eucharistic prayer is an essential expression. Through the spiritual enactment of the three main aspects of the Eucharist—Thanksgiving, Anamnesis and Epiclesis⁷⁰—the congregation forms an indivisible whole in the act of consecration. The essence of the Eucharist is encapsulated by the Greek concept *metabole* referring to the sacramental change that occurs in the bread and wine. However, the religious importance of the consecrated elements is distorted if these are perceived outside the context of the Holy Communion.

After their consecration, the Orthodox Church does no longer regard the bread and wine as mere symbolic elements but as the reality and truth of the Body and Blood of Christ. Correspondingly, the Eucharistic sacrament simultaneously incorporates a sense of physical existence, in the earthly content of the wine and bread and a spiritual hypostasis in their divine form, of Blood and Body. In this religious context it should be emphasised that the Orthodox dogma rejects the doctrinal concept of transubstantiation that distinguishes between the transformed elements and the material qualities, which are not an essential part of them and hence remain the same.⁷¹ In Orthodoxy, the sacrament of the Body and Blood is understood as the introduction of the humankind "into heavenly sanctuary (and) eternity"⁷² in which the human-divine communion is consolidated.

The community of faithful confirms its collective participation in the sacramental act by its acceptance—"Amen", a form of "yes"—of God's love

and Providence. Through Christ's sacrifice—the Orthodox perception of the Eucharist also emphasises the sacrificial content of the *mysterion*—the congregation does not simply recollect the events of His sacrifice but becomes a contemporary participant.⁷³ Hence in the Eucharist the worshipper not only receives a sense of moral and emotional fulfilment, but more importantly the necessary spiritual nourishment for the realisation of his essence.

The Holy Matrimony of Marriage

The sacrament of Marriage⁷⁴ is a projection of the diversity and unity of the Triune God upon the individual worshipper. Each human being—made in the image and likeness of the Creator—is ideally destined to share his hypostases with another person, in a state of grace. This union is of an eternal sacramental nature in Orthodoxy, a belief that is reflected, on the solemnity of the *mysterion* and the performance of a ceremonial crowning. The eternal character—aspiration—of the sacrament is reiterated by the participants' consensual awareness. In the absence of the required responsibility involved—in an accepted union—an Orthodox marriage could be deemed legally dissolvable.

Certain theological assumptions on Marriage—including the use of contraception, abortion and pre-marital relations—form also part of the sacramental act. On all three counts, Orthodoxy adheres to a rather conservative view, originating in the doctrinal significance of the *mysterion*. However, these religious objectives have never been pursued to the polemic extent, experienced within other Christian denominations. This is a particularly important point that relates to the fundamentalist appraisal—to which Orthodoxy was subjected in the previous chapter—further reaffirming its conclusions.

Orthodox Iconography

The current appraisal of the “doctrinal” and “functional” content of Orthodoxy would be incomplete without a reference to the aesthetic-transcendental dimension of Orthodox iconography. The permanent presence of religious icons⁷⁵ in the Orthodox Church constitutes an expression of the ecclesiastical Tradition, a congruent and revelatory aspect of the liturgical acts and cere-

monies. Through the pictorial and describable representation of the human hypostasis of God, the congregation relates to a vision, of spiritual essence. These images of Christ and the saints do not aim to reduce the worshipping experience to a mere emotional appropriation. Instead, they manifest in full evidence the transfigured nature of humanity, centred on the divine revelation. Orthodox iconography incorporates the physical–visual–and metaphysical–symbolic–referents of God’s Incarnation, without diminishing the religious faith to a summation of abstract concepts.

The Orthodox icon has remained a part of the liturgical cycles, on a collective and a private level, despite variable theological and historical interpretations of its symbolic importance. In this context, I specifically refer to the iconoclastic controversy, which repudiated the representation of God’s physical–material hypostases—professing charges of idolatry—pertaining to the veneration of icons. As a result an Orthodox iconographic tradition developed, which constituted a departure from three-dimensional aesthetic forms, since these were perceived as a signifier of pagan idolatry.

For the Orthodox congregation, the presence of icons remains very important, not simply as a specific liturgical referent within the sacramental acts but also as a source of strength in moments of need and crisis. Orthodox believers share a conviction in the miraculous properties of particular icons—for example, the icon of *Theotokos* on the Greek island of Tinos—venerated and honoured, for their healing powers. Orthodox icons are not mere images of the unknowable and indescribable Creator, but a holistic expression of the human–divine communion and a visible representation of heaven upon earth⁷⁶.

Serbian Orthodoxy:

The union of the religious and the national content

The preceding Orthodox assumptions—doctrinal and functional—are considered to be the *property* of a catholic ecclesiastical body. As it has already been suggested, the catholicity of the Orthodox Church is understood in terms of a united, religious entity, whose different parts are identical. This conviction is stemming from the belief that Christ’s “ultimate” sacrifice is not subjected to spatial and temporal limitations, but is rather of an indissoluble and transcending nature. Orthodoxy is hence permeated by a sense of unity, as a referent of the apostolic ecclesiastical Tradition.

Considering the theoretically universal appeal of the Orthodox faith, a question arises with regard to the processes involved in the incorporation of anthropocentric and eternal religious precepts, into the narrow confines of national determinism. In other words, how does Orthodoxy become the foundation signifier of a nation?

Orthodoxy, through the emphasis she places upon the physical and metaphysical hypostases of the congregation, could be regarded as a primordial essence (*ousia*) of a nation⁷⁷ or an *ethnie*.⁷⁸ Shared ancestral origins, historical recollections—distilled in the Tradition of the worshipping collectivity—and a sense of purpose—identified with the human–divine communion—consolidate an underlying notion of a spiritual–mystical belonging. This primordial interpretation of the Orthodox national content chronologically precedes the evolution of the nation and nation–state—both modern derivatives of the ideals of the French Revolution. In the Serbian context, this temporal distance is exemplified by the autocephaly of the Serbian Church, in 1219—in the supra-national Byzantium—as opposed to the confirmation of its strictly national (autocephalous) existence in the Serbian state, in 1879.

The concept of autocephaly⁷⁹ could be etymologically traced to its Greek origins,⁸⁰ conveying the meaning of independence and of a self-governing body with its own head (*kephali*). In ecclesiastical terms, to be autocephalous connotes a measure of autonomy—most often conferred by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople—on the basis of which national synods and the election of prelates are forged. In its original form, the autocephalous principle involved the appointment of a primate, whose responsibilities pertained to a number of dioceses. It eventually evolved into a congruent notion of an ecclesiastical and territorial union, projected on a national level. To that end, distant historical recollections of past empires and the experience of the organisational Millet⁸¹ system during the Ottoman rule—placing all the non-Muslim populations under the jurisdiction of the Church—contributed to Orthodoxy's gradual nationalisation. The Orthodox confessional content was divided into a collectivity of autocephalous congregations of variable numerical significance, lead by their own bishops. In principle, however, these Churches are still united in the communion and belief in the Triune God.

Yet, as the close correlation of a religious and political content—the latter, purely conceived in its étatist manifestation—constitutes the foundation of Orthodox autocephaly, the substance of this union also evokes memories of Caesaropapism.⁸² Caesaropapism refers to the legal primacy of imperial

authority over the church's hierarchy, a social-political phenomenon, which departed from the Byzantine ideal of the synergetic and organic union, between the profane and sacred hypostases of the Christian society. This Justinian principle assigned "the priesthood ministers to things divine; the imperial authority... in things human; but both proceed from one and the same source... both adorn the life of man".⁸³ Orthodoxy's eventual transformation into an interdependent aspect of the nation-state (as the sacralisation and promoter of its identity and culture) resulted into the general decline of the Church, through her "submission" to the national political structures.

Under these circumstances, the Orthodox doctrine evolved into a distinctive Serbian national property,⁸⁴ through the incorporation and introduction of specific cosmological assumptions. The distance between the doctrine and *cultus* was bridged with the veneration of Serbian saints, with whom the Serbian congregation could identify, as their past, present and ultimate existence—in resurrection—was a shared one. These venerated patriots are ceremonially remembered and iconographically honoured—as a sacred reference of righteous belief—and importantly, their intercession with God is requested.

A sense of temporal continuity is created by the adoption of an ecclesiastical calendar, accommodating particular Serbian traditions and historical references within the liturgical cycles. In this temporal context, historical encounters and events are defended, adapted and gain significance by their assimilation in the sacred time of national mythical origins. This chronological conjunction of past and present provides the Serbian worshipping community with a "road map" on their existence, upon which conclusions could be drawn, regarding their ancestral, present and forthcoming circumstances.

Ultimately, a measure of indigenous linguistic distinction—on a liturgical, instructive, scriptural and sacramental level—nurtured by the ecclesiastical introduction of a vernacular language, underpins the interaction of the religious and national content. Their fusion is epitomised in the autocephalous status of the Serbian Church, which confers a sense of spiritual and national autonomy. In consequence, the Church's position as the guardian and propagator of the Serbian mnemonic content—historicity—is enhanced and consolidated. This conviction is reinforced through the presence of perceived or actual threats, often equated with the close "physical"—geographical—and cultural proximity to Serbianhood, of Catholic Croats and Albanians in Kosovo, against whom the national culture and

ethos should be protected. A sacralised notion of Serbian identity is thus established, structured upon a widespread awareness of the mythical/historical traditions of the nation, around which the vision of an “imagined”, diachronic community crystallises, in the minds of its members.

The Foundations of the Serbian Orthodoxy

The first Serbian encounter with the precepts of the Christian faith is chronologically identified with the reign of Emperor Heraclius (610–641 AD).⁸⁵ This initial effort to assimilate the Serbian people was not entirely successful for reasons attributed to the limited nature and scope of the process—solely concentrating on particular groups—the use of the Latin language, the relative geographical remoteness of their settlement and the societal resilience of pagan traditions. Their eventual Christianisation would proceed, at a later stage, under the supervision and guidance of Emperor Vasilios I (867–886 AD), in response to a Serbian request whose historical origins are related to the intensified introduction of the Christian dogma among the Slavs and the ensuing national and linguistic emancipation.⁸⁶ Under these circumstances, the Serbian people accepted Christianity in the belief that their inclusion in the Byzantine Christian cosmology would also consolidate their administrative structures and incorporate their language (through ecclesiastical Tradition and ceremonial rites) in the daily life of their worshipping communities. It should, however, be emphasised, that the foregoing historical account does not aim to diminish the Christianisation of the Serbs to an act of opportunistic predisposition or to mere “geopolitical” considerations—in a looser interpretation of the term, compared to its current applications.⁸⁷

Instead, Christianity’s attraction should be sought in the union of faith and Tradition, which enables a universal religious content⁸⁸ to become an integral part of a specific ecclesiastical collectivity. In the Christian Slavonic context, this process was rendered feasible through the missionary work of St. Cyril and St. Methodius.⁸⁹ To that end, their theological contribution focused on the translation of the Bible and the liturgical books into a Slavonic language. The usage of the indefinite article pertains to the fact that the utilised Slavonic alphabet was the spoken—and to them, familiar—Macedonian dialect (*παλαιοσλαβικη*) of the Slav inhabitants, who lived in the surrounding area of Thessaloniki. Upon its liturgical function, this

dialect became the ceremonial and instructive language of the Slavonic Orthodox Churches, contributing to a more closely observed and nationally aware, God-mankind union.

Serbian historiography primarily attributes the completion of the Christianisation process to St. Sava⁹⁰ (1173–1236), probably the most venerated and celebrated of Serbian saints. A descendant of the Nemanjic dynasty, which united the fragmented Serbian nation, St. Sava is credited with the formation of a primordial sense and reference of both Serbian statehood and nationhood. Throughout a life of continuous commitment to the Serbian and Christian causes, St. Sava established an ascetic presence in Mount Athos, including the spiritual transformation of Hilandar,⁹¹ created a Serbian literary tradition and more importantly, became the first archbishop of an autocephalous Serbian Church in 1219. With regard to the issue of the Serbian autocephaly, conflicting references⁹² persist, as to where it was granted—Constantinople or Nicaea—and also, by whom it was affirmed—Patriarch German or Manuel Sarantinos. In spite of these historical inconsistencies, associated mostly with the biographers of St. Sava, the autocephalous status of the Serbian Church—an act of international recognition by contemporary standards—confirmed the nation's membership in the Orthodox communion and importantly, secured its national preservation and spiritual continuance.

St. Sava's importance is signified by his belief that the Serbian people constituted a unique national collectivity, a fact confirmed in the inception and consolidation of an enduring ecclesiastical legacy. Thus commonly understood patterns of Orthodox Serbian biography served as integrative means that brought the "personal" closer to the "social". The required depth of these fundamental features—in order to be accepted, as a collective system of cognition and valuation—was rendered possible by the institution of the Serbian Church. St. Sava's contribution to a previously limited ecclesiastical literature is considered invaluable. The divine service of St. Symeon was the first work of its kind in Serbia followed by others, including the Typicon (Rules) of Hilandar and the translation of *Nomocanon* (*Πηδαλιον*).⁹³ The latter was a Byzantine collection of canon and civil laws, which evolved into a Serbian ecclesiastical document of fundamental value and upon which a consistent view of the Church, of her mission and various ministries was delineated. Importantly, the ecclesiastical use of the Serbian linguistic medium provided a principle of verification for the congregation, whose statements under the right conditions⁹⁴ acquired factual significance, as models that brought about religious discernment.

This process of theological, spiritual and linguistic unification also included a “territorial” perception of the Serbian community, manifested in the organisation of twelve episcopal sees⁹⁵—the moral, temporal and spatial parameters of the Serbian faith. The diocesan organisation of the Church facilitated the physical incorporation and orientation of Orthodox traditions through the creation of sacralised spatial referents. Their religious connotation as “points of entrance” into the Kingdom of Heaven or simply as “sacred centres” is further elucidated by Mircea Eliade’s observation on the subject.⁹⁶ In Eliade’s analysis, the most powerful sense of orientation emanates from the centre, as it focalises the entire human-divine communion and every religious activity that is derived from it. The Serbian sacred space is also determined by its sacred centres, identified with the altars of religious architecture—early examples of which are found in Zica—or designated places in nature, like the entire area of Kosovo.⁹⁷

It becomes apparent that upon the accumulative ecclesiastical work of St. Sava the foundations were forged for a concrete notion of Orthodox Serbianhood in terms of historical origins, purpose and future destiny. The final chapter in this process was the canonisation of St. Sava, of his father and almost of every other member of the Nemanjić royal genealogy.⁹⁸ As it has already been suggested, the cult of saints as the congregation’s heavenly petitioners and protectors is an important aspect of the Orthodox dogma. This sanctified lineage “gave to the Serbian people saints who had come from among their ranks and would in heaven be tireless protectors of the Serbian State... rulers... people and the entire patrimony”.⁹⁹ The Serbian congregation was formed both in heaven and on earth, reiterated by the liturgical commemoration of sanctified patriots that eventually evolved into a precious spiritual and exegetic referent—in particular, during the Ottoman period—of ancestral descent and a continuous linguistic and historical presence.

Saint-Savism (*Svetosavlje*) as a primordial given factor of Serb culture constitutes the principled and fundamental expression of the love of and the life in Orthodoxy, in accordance with the national traditions. It is “the soul [which] kept its memory alive... when the body succumbed to the Turks”¹⁰⁰ to partly paraphrase Ivo Banac’s account of the relationship between the Nemanjić Kingdom and the Serbian Church, or rather the foundations of heavenly Serbia. In the case of the former, Orthodoxy’s transcending nature and spirituality connotes—in an ironic manner, when considering the destruction of St. Sava’s remains by the Turks—my primary hypothesis, which has identified Orthodoxy as the sacralisation of the Serbian identity.

The cumulated significance of the spatial, temporal, linguistic and historical heritage of the Serbian community is experienced in the dialectical processes of *morphogenesis* (structure generation) and of *morphostasis* (structure stabilisation).¹⁰¹ These pertain to the construction of a Serbian identity, (upon religious orientations and references) whereby the sacred and metaphysical is reflected in the creation of a spiritual and “physical” boundary, dividing the internal from the external, rendering the Serbian collectivity a perceived and a visible entity. In other words, it establishes the topography and the morphology of the Serbian enclave, conceived as the physical vision and approximation, of the Serbian (imagined community) nation. Under these conditions, Orthodoxy amounts to a complete ontological and cosmological expression of a society persisting from the beginning of time (*in illo tempore*) to the present day.

In this context, two additional elucidations are necessary. The first of these pertains to the generation and stabilisation of the Serb structure. Once secured, the Serb enclave does not maintain a rigid or monolithic form, due to variable historical conditions and their contained social-political implications. To that extent, the structure is subjected to the process of *morphopoiesi*,¹⁰² according to which its different hypostases may change or evolve, however, they remain a part of the same single and ideal essence. This process is rendered possible through the living continuity of the Orthodox Tradition that assumes new supplementary forms without superseding the old.

With regard to the conception of a boundary, it is perceived as “not that at which something stops, but as the Greek recognised, the boundary is that from which something begins its... unfolding”.¹⁰³ The boundaries of the Serbian enclave are demarcated in the ethnic consciousness by a religiously induced notion of a moral geography. This territorial premise is centred on the symbolic significance and physical presence of ancestral bodies, in the soil of the enclave. In view of the fact that Serbian burial cites are located in almost every republic of the former Yugoslavia, these physical remains should not be abased to a mere, legitimating signifier, in the political pursuit of a Greater Serbia.¹⁰⁴ In spite of strong evidence, supporting the socio-political importance of dead bodies in the Serb polity, I shall instead concentrate upon their cosmological and spiritual efficacy, following from the earlier definition of the Serbian nation, as an “imagined community.”

As such, the significance of buried forefathers pertains to both religious and symbolic grounds. In Orthodoxy, the denotation of the physical—in

terms of the human body—is reiterated in the belief of the ultimate resurrection of the spiritual and material hypostases.¹⁰⁵ This belief is manifested in the religiously construed relation of the living community with that of the dead through ceremonial rites and commemoration. The human–divine communion involves in the case of the former, the living and the dead in a homologous union before God. Any alteration of this “synergetic” kinship, for example through the desecration of burial sites, destroys a fundamental aspect of the national and collective subjectivity. The ensuing sense of dislocation emanates from the deprivation of the physical concreteness—“his locus est”¹⁰⁶—of the boundary and the chronological discontinuity between the past and present. This is further reiterated, when considering the symbolic importance of sanctified bodies, as legitimate projections of the Serbian being, or what Katherine Verdery euphemistically describes as “the curriculum vitae or résumé of dead people”.¹⁰⁷

This curriculum vitae or résumé is defined for the purposes of my analysis, as the nucleus of a Serbian “eternal religion”, that is a culmination of non-negotiable “truth-claims”, which are inextricably linked to the Serbian Orthodox cosmology. Upon these assumptions historical instances are interpreted and an exegetic justification is provided, beyond their factual substance. The constitutive elements of the Serb eternal religion could be summated along the thematical axis of loyalty and betrayal and identified in terms of:

- moral preferences, depicted as the intended condition of life and founded upon the universally shared Christian principles of love, salvation, forgiveness, resurrection and the juxtaposition of good and evil;
- the veneration of Serbian saints; and
- a sense of spatial and temporal continuity through the use of the ecclesiastical calendar and references to sanctified perceptions of communal territoriality.

Orthodoxy as the Sacralisation of the Serbian Identity

Orthodoxy’s importance as the means of sacralisation of the Serbian identity is forged upon the exegetic processes by which the religious content reinforces or objectifies an orderly interpretation of human perceptions and existence. The objectification of Serbian Orthodoxy relates to the

forms by which transcendental religious referents are integrated, as signifiers of meaning, order and social consistency for the congregation. In the process, contradictions and predicaments are juxtaposed with sacred knowledge, which is not subjected to the arbitrariness of the profane—ephemeral—experience.

This would of course be a purely abstract assumption if it were not contextualised in the Serbian cosmology. On a purely functional level, the Serbian Orthodox Church is the “mediator” between the sacred and the profane that accordingly actualises and systematises the religious doctrine. This particular disposition has been invariably manifested in the historical course of Serbia.¹⁰⁸ Yet, this explanatory avenue reduces the significance of the sacred into an institutional content the equivalent of which would be a perception of the human being as a single physical entity. Importantly, it abases the preceding perception of Orthodoxy as a source of non-negotiable truth claims, since this notion rests upon the conviction that the physical and the metaphysical are homologous substances of the human being.

The objectification of Serbian Orthodoxy revolves around her symbolic realm upon which profane inconsistencies or incoherences are settled and socially crucial beliefs are validated by being part of a preferred norm of life. According to Hans Mol, “the elaboration of symbol systems arose from the advantage that they had for both the manipulation of the environment (instrumental mastery) and the security man needed within his environment (integrative perception—understanding)”.¹⁰⁹ In Orthodoxy’s case, a reconciliatory character pervades the human–divine communion, exemplified in the symbolic importance of Christ’s sacrifice. This sacrificial act nurtures a subtle sense of belonging which is not beyond redemption, a belief that is then reiterated as a part of sacramental rituals: the Eucharist, visual representations—iconography—and a spatial/temporal perception.

The Serbian Orthodox notion of time is concretised in the use of the ecclesiastical calendar, which organises the annual and weekly cycles of the congregation around the religious suppositions of the resurrection. The Serbian Orthodox Church uses the revised Julian calendar for the determination of the spring equinox, resulting into a delay of thirteen days when compared with Western Christianity.¹¹⁰ This chronological delay has subsequently evolved into a signifier of the righteousness and purity of the Serbian faith.

On a cognitive level, the ecclesiastical calendar amounts to a sanctified “re-enactment” of the national lineage, through the ritual significance bestowed upon historical events and venerated patriots. The Serbian being is subsequently defined within a genealogy of faith forged upon the religious

actualisation of the past into the present. This ecclesiastical perception of time introduces a question on the interpretation of temporal references on linear or cyclical grounds. In other words, does the Serbian experience of the sacred pertain to historical cycles and loops, or is it a part of a “forward” advancing process?

Mircea Eliade’s¹¹¹ account on this subject attributes solely to Western literate tradition a linear perception of time. It follows that every other culture adheres to cyclical temporal notions that depend upon the perpetuated ritual experience of the past. In the Serbian context the cyclical perception of time is manifested in the liturgical nature of Orthodoxy. This temporal experience also involves a linear progression, whose binary relates to purely biological and physical processes—the passage from birth to death—and the metaphysical movement toward eternal rest, through the ultimate resurrection.

Under these circumstances, the Serbian infant is initiated and spiritually introduced in the ecclesiastical body by the sacramental acts of baptism and chrismation—the Chrism being blessed by the bishop of the autocephalous church. Every subsequent part of his or her individual and communal biography shall be delineated through Orthodoxy’s doctrinal and functional precepts. These shall include a participation in liturgical cycles or the possible personal experiences of the *mysterion* of marriage and the baptism of one’s children.

Serbian Orthodoxy hence constitutes an integral rather than an exceptional occasion in life, which ritually reinforces—through the intersection of past and present—and restores individual and societal perceptions of identity. Serbian Orthodoxy, as a concrete system of meaning, establishes a common social fabric, a measure of direction and cognitive orientation that anchors the emotions and consistency of Serbianhood.

Krsna Slava

The union of the Serbian Orthodox and national tradition is distilled in the *Krsna Slava*, the ritual celebration, veneration and observance of a family’s own patron saint, which locates personal perceptions of the self—as defined within the household—in the communal, religious and cultural context. The collective character of this ritualistic act is encapsulated in the popular folk saying *gdje je slava, tu je Srbin*¹¹² meaning *where there is a slava, there is a Serb*.

The ritualistic substance of this Serbian custom incorporates aspects of pagan traditions with minimal ecclesiastical references.¹¹³ With regard to the former, the historical sources¹¹⁴ on the subject of affinitive, pre-Christian, Serbian practices are rather limited. On the whole, their faith was forged on the veneration of *Dajbog* or *Dabog* (the God of thunder) in conjunction with the natural elements and the practice of magic and oracles.¹¹⁵ Following their Christianisation, certain suppositions including the positive humanistic, ethnocentric, protective and practical attributes of *Dabog* were assimilated, with the support of St. Sava, into the Serbian Orthodox faith.¹¹⁶

To that end, the national custom of the *slava* is an expression of the diachronic respect, love and honour, once bestowed upon the God of the household and currently ascribed to a Christian protector saint who determines the family's good fortune. The homebound or confined ritual of the celebration emphasises the collective essence of the family unit—through the kinship of the female genealogy¹¹⁷—, which is then socially projected by the ritual inclusion of friends and the acceptance of the ecclesiastical blessing.

From a purely Orthodox perspective, there are neither related liturgical services nor specific prayers involved in the *slava*. In fact, the ecclesiastical participation is primarily sanctionable and evolves around the cathartic sanctification of the household and water¹¹⁸—used in the *slava* bread—in preparation for the family's celebration. This bread would be then blessed in the Church, on the morning of the *slava*.¹¹⁹ The Orthodox association is once more invoked around the family table through the triple, ritual repetition of the cutting of the loaf, as a reference to the Triune God.¹²⁰

In consequence, the *slava* becomes a simultaneous signifier of national and spiritual kinship and a core expression of the Serbian cosmology whereby the dialectics of temporal, physical and spiritual continuity converge into validated perceptions of cultural and social reality—re-enacted, on a recurrent (annual) basis.

The Religious (Non) Affinity of the Serbs

When accounting for the religiosity of the Serbian peoples, variable interpretations are available oscillating between positive dispositions—in terms of an optimistic and redeemable view of human nature—to eschatological appraisals, which profess to a religious vacuum. Such a dichotomy of views

is in fact originating from the primal Orthodox assertion of the human subject, as an essence of both physical and metaphysical hypostases. Different evaluative perceptions are forged upon the ways in which the religious convictions interact with the physical circumstances and the metaphysical anxieties of the Serbian faithful.

The sociological evidence offers a rather pessimistic record on the religious affinity of the Serbs. In this context, it should be noted that religious denominations ceased to be officially recorded in the former Yugoslavia in 1953,¹²¹ as the ideological content of the latter was considered to render the necessity of the former “obsolete”. In consequence, the cumulative account of the communist period¹²² suggested substantial erosion in Orthodoxy’s popular perception as a Serbian foundation signifier. This social trend was manifested even within traditionally Orthodox, Serbian regions, where for instance only three per cent of the young population identified themselves through Orthodoxy’s cause.¹²³

The ensuing explanations on this issue juxtapose the decrease in religious adherence, with the processes of secularisation and modernisation.¹²⁴ Yugoslavism as the expression of both, amounted to a considerable challenge to the non-negotiable features of Serbian Orthodoxy. Communism, with its simplistic categories, assumed that secularisation could be solely accelerated by industrialisation and education. These views were also entertained by Yugoslav socialism, the experience of which led to the erosion of the traditional indices of Church attachment, belief and practices and the decline of the legitimating potential of the Serbian ecclesiastical institutions. Large sections of the Serbian society and culture were hence “removed” from the domination of religious organisations and symbols.¹²⁵ This was rendered possible by the strong emotional support for the Yugoslav idea, the supranational nature of which opposed the close approximation of the Orthodox and Serbian ethnic causes.

As a result, the importance of individual and communal faith declined through the progressive neglect of the ecclesiastical, social functions. In an increasingly differentiated (urban) environment, the Serbian family or locality acquired additional (profane) referents of identification. The demographic dislocations, experienced within the Yugoslav geography, including war losses and migratory tendencies, further induced this social development.¹²⁶ These processes provide yet another exegetic perspective in the paradigm of secularisation, as they account for the decline of religiosity in geographical areas—for example, Kosovo and Macedonia—whose experience and scope of modernisation was less intensive.

Under these circumstances, the obvious question would be as to whether there are sufficient grounds to justify the presence of a religious content in Serbianhood. In spite of the foregoing evidence, the synoptic answer would be a positive one, following from the initial assertion that attributed physical and metaphysical hypostases to the human essence. From a purely doctrinal point of view, the prolonged “abstinence” from Orthodoxy’s sacraments and liturgical cycles does not result in a permanent state of exclusion from the *communio in sacris*. For instance, the *mysterion* of Chrismation is used as a sacrament of reconciliation for the Orthodox faithful who wish to return to the Church. Importantly, the religious experience cannot be lessened to its ritual and institutional manifestations, as human beings do not only consist of a material substance. It follows that Yugoslavia’s profane (physical) processes of secularisation and modernisation¹²⁷ were different hypostases of the same Orthodox-defined, Serbian essence. The “physical” referent pertains to the fact that communism failed to reconcile the metaphysical anxieties of human nature.¹²⁸

For that matter, the self-awareness or cohesion of Serbianhood could only be substantiated within Orthodoxy, whereby the human being fulfils his or her potential(s) in a concrete spiritual, temporal and spatial context. The nation evolves into a collectivity of faith, capable of surmounting any obstacles, without abasing loyalty into the experience of obedience as “Orthodoxy desires unity-in-diversity, not uniformity; harmony in freedom, not absorption”.¹²⁹ Of course, social-political and historical conditions often undermine this “ideal” position of minimal friction and maximal function of the Serbian community. Personal perceptions of the religious experience exist, in the scope of the national demography—with religious affinities being more prominent in rural areas. Within the extant scope of adherence to the Orthodox faith, certain views persist which identify *betrayal* with the neglect of personal, Orthodox ecclesiastical (liturgical) duty and with the issue of conversion—the adoption of a new religious orientation and a re-ordering of confessional priorities and values.

This belief has been invariably articulated within ecclesiastical statements, which correlated Orthodoxy, with “certain conditions (that) must be met in order for Serbs to restore their... State. If the highest government representatives are not Orthodox, that is, if they maintain no spiritual ties with the Serbian Orthodox Church; do not attend religious service; do not take Communion, do not celebrate *Slava*; do not invite a priest to bless water,... if they refuse to cross themselves... they cannot be legitimate Serbian representatives.”¹³⁰ This proclamation of purity underpins the confrontational aspects

of the Serbian identity, which revolves around objective and perceived enemies of a different religious denomination; a fact that potentially hinders—though does not render impossible—their social relations. Due to the close geographical proximity of Serbian Orthodoxy with Catholicism and Islam, and considering the region’s historical fate, the Serbian Church has assigned to herself the “role” of the national defender. This perception originates in challenges against the spatial (physical) and metaphysical (spiritual) hypostases of the Orthodox Serbian enclave. Importantly, it pertains to a holistic interpretation of the human subject whose ultimate perception of personhood and order is a derivative of a lineage of faith encapsulated in the non-negotiable “truth claims” of the eternal religion.¹³¹

Conclusion

This chapter assessed the main hypothesis—Orthodoxy sacralises the Serbian identity—through the dialectical interaction between the religious content of the former and the national substance of the latter. Orthodoxy was defined in terms of her doctrinal and *cultus* (functional) assumptions, which located the human being within the context of the human-divine communion. This union is subsequently expressed through the constitution of a holistic cosmology, evolving upon spatial, temporal, aesthetic, sacramental, historical or spiritual signifiers and referents of faith.

The autocephaly of the Church was established as the point of convergence between Orthodoxy’s catholic–universal character and perceptions, pertaining to a national collectivity. The autocephalous Serbian Church became a part of the Orthodox communion in 1219 and has since developed—subject to her socio-political environment—into a concrete storehouse of truth and of right belief as a genealogy of faith, sanctified by the mediative presence, of venerated patriots. However, it should be noted that other “national” members of the Orthodox collectivity experience a similar, personal understanding of religion. For Dostoyevsky, Christ is a Russian; for Kazantzakis¹³², the Creator is the personalisation of the Greek *romiosini*.

In spite of local, cultural specificities and variable approaches or degrees of commitment toward the sacred,¹³³ the Serb Orthodox essence is concretised into the following eternal religious precepts:

- shared historical references and kinship, encapsulated within the Serbian Orthodox tradition;

- the “geography of faith”, as a territorial signifier that evolves into a repository of memories and associations, bound by the lives and struggles of Serbian heroes and saints. The Serbian homeland is rendered *sui generis*, whose inner meanings can be fathomed only by the initiated members of the nation;
- the Serbian language, which in its ecclesiastical form constitutes a unique aspect of Serbian identity;
- a sense of temporal continuity, manifested in the use of the Serb ecclesiastical calendar, as a part of the liturgical cycles; and
- the *Slava*, a particular genealogical, social, and spiritual bond of Serbianhood, which ritually contextualises the Serbian physical–household–and metaphysical substances within Orthodoxy.

The foregoing principles of the Serbian eternal religion constitute the diachronic cognitive and orientational signifiers of the Serbian being, upon which moral perceptions and patterns of social conduct are constructed. Their concrete manifestation, in the life of *Homo Serbicus*, is the subject of the following chapter.

Notes

- 1 Quoted by Arnakis, E., “The role of Religion in the development of Balkan nationalism” in Charles and Barbara Jelavich (eds.), *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and Politics since the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 115.
- 2 Quoted by Giddens, Antony, *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies* (London: Hutchinson, 1973), p. 111. In his analysis, Giddens draws a distinction between class consciousness and class awareness. In my syllogism, the concept of “class” is substituted by the idea of national affiliation and subsequently by that of “national” consciousness.
- 3 The geography of faith corresponds to a sense of space that entails places of martyrdom and worship, important shrines and ecclesiastical monuments. This concept is introduced by Kitromilides, Paschalis M. in his article, “Balkan Mentality: History, Legend, Imagination” in *Nations and Nationalism*, 2 (2), 1996, p. 180.
- 4 Quoted by *Pravoslavljje*, No. 419, 1 September 1984.
- 5 This dichotomy is introduced by Yandell, Keith E., *Philosophy of Religion: A Contemporary Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 57–59.
- 6 Religious knowledge—by a revelation—is beyond questioning, that is more axiomatic and from which an axiology is derived. The revelation then sustains the collective order and socialisation gives it protection.

- 7 Quoted by Yandell, K. E., *Philosophy of Religion: A Contemporary Introduction*, p. 25.
- 8 It should be noted that this absolute fidelity is specific to Orthodoxy; Western Christianity permits a degree of questioning.
- 9 See Bratsiotis, Panagiotis and Florovsky, Georges, *Orthodoxy: A Faith and Order Dialogue* (Geneva, 1960).
- 10 See Ware, Timothy (Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia), *The Orthodox Church*, New Edition (London: Penguin Books, 1997), pp. 18–42.
- 11 For example, the councils of Constantinople upheld the theology of St. Gregory Palamas in 1341 and 1351, who endorsed a dichotomy between God's energies and His essence (*ousia*). The former establishes the dialectics of His relation with humankind, whereby the latter is unapproachable. See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 61–71.
- 12 *Ibid*, pp. 20–2.
- 13 Quoted by Florovsky, Georges, "The Elements of Liturgy in the Orthodox Catholic Church" in *One Church*, Vol. XIII, Nos. 1–2, 1959, p. 24.
- 14 See Reischauer, August Karl, *The Nature and Truth of the Great Religions: Towards a Philosophy of Religion* (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle Company Inc., 1966), pp. 198–212.
- 15 The experience of truth as a knowledge, which does not require a concrete definition is a derivative of the ecclesiastical Tradition—not to be confused with mere customs—that delineates the deeper spiritual substance of the Church—on matters of faith and life—in the form of broad ethical guidelines.
- 16 The Book of Genesis 1:26
- 17 See Lossky, Vladimir, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Cambridge: James Clark & Co. Ltd, 1991), especially the fifth chapter on the "Created Being", p. 113.
- 18 The significance of the physical, in terms of the human body, is reiterated in the Orthodox belief of the ultimate resurrection, on the grounds of which cremation is forbidden. This particular matter shall be elaborated upon in the analysis of the territorial perceptions of the Serbian Orthodox Church.
- 19 This particular perception of the relationship between God and humankind is attributed to Philaret of Moscow and is cited in Lossky, Vladimir, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, p. 92. It is worth noting that Vladimir Lossky's treatise of Orthodox mystical theology elaborates upon the conceptual premise that ecclesiastical doctrine and experience mutually condition each other.
- 20 Quoted by Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 219.
- 21 Quoted by Gillet, Lev, "A Monk of the Eastern Church" in *Orthodox Spirituality* (London, 1978), p. 23.
- 22 The Slavonic term *sobor* means a gathering or an assembly of faithful and *sobornost* connotes the dialectical relationship of the ecclesiastical body that is founded on both the freedom and fellowship of its members.
- 23 Quoted by Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 244.
- 24 Quoted by Evdokimov, Paul, *L'Orthodoxie* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1959), p. 218.

- 25 See Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith: An Introduction to Orthodox Theology*, translated by Keith Schram (Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1991), pp. 75–88.
- 26 See Quinn, Philip L., “Sin and Original Sin” in Quinn, Philip L. and Taliaferro, Charles (eds.), *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 541–48.
- 27 See, Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 222–25.
- 28 The concept of theosis is customarily associated with St Gregory Palamas, a Greek apologist of hesychasm—a linguistic derivative of the Greek *hesychia*, “quietude”—who believed that through a meditative process, “a prayer of the mind,” the divine energies of creation can be actually seen. See Meyendorff, John, *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, translated by G. Lawrence (London: Faith Press, 1964). Vladimir Lossky in *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* defines hesychasm as an ascetical discipline, an inner prayer, aimed at purifying the mind, pp. 209–11.
- 29 The transfiguration in the divine glory is alluded to in Psalm 82:6, cf. John 10:34, where it is declared by the saints that “you are all gods, sons of the Most High, all of you.”
- 30 Quoted by Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith: An Introduction to Orthodox Theology*, p. 75.
- 31 The significance of this doctrine for the Orthodox Church is underlined by Vladimir Lossky, who considers that “between the Trinity and hell there is no other choice.” Lossky, Vladimir, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, p. 66.
- 32 In Western Christianity, God is primarily perceived in terms of a one, single, entity and the Trinity of Persons is considered as an irrational truth found in revelation.
- 33 Quoted by Meerson, Michael, “The Doctrinal Foundation of Orthodoxy”, p. 21.
- 34 In order to account for the enticement of the Orthodox option to the Serbian collectivity, theological references, as the aforementioned, are both necessary and unavoidable for a holistic exegesis of the subject. Explanatory accounts on the idea of the Triune God are provided by Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith*, pp. 20–36 (especially pp. 26–29); and Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 208–18.
- 35 The doctrinal significance attached to the hypostasis of Christ contributed to the dispute of the *Filioque*, centred on the theological assumption which holds that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. This doctrinal addition to the Creed was rejected by the Orthodox Church since it was not supported by an Ecumenical Council—its origins are attributed to Charlemagne’s court—paving the way for the eventual schism of the two Christian halves—Eastern/Western. See Runciman, S., *The Eastern Schism: A Study of the Papacy and Eastern Churches During the 11th and 12th Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955).
- 36 The religious doctrines of Arianism, Nestorianism and Monophysitism or Monotheism, were respectively addressed and condemned by the councils of Nicaea (325), Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). They subsequently reiterated the doctrine of Trinity (Christ is fully God), Christ’s humanity and how

- divine and human natures are in union in one person. See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 20–25.
- 37 The precepts of Christology permeate these excerpts, taken from the Epistle to the Hebrews, which emphasise the theological significance of Christ within Orthodoxy. Their relation to the doctrine of Christ is elaborated by Meerson, Michael A., “The Doctrinal Foundation of Orthodoxy”, pp. 21–23.
- 38 The human–divine communion is objectified and personalised in the Virgin Mary, seen as the ultimate example of God and man’s synergy, in which she represents the human dimension of the Incarnation. The social significance of the Mariological doctrine in Serbia shall be discussed in the next chapter.
- 39 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 254–61; and Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith*, pp. 99–101.
- 40 This is an excerpt from John 14:26 and forms a part of Michael Meerson’s discussion of the Holy Spirit, pp. 26–27.
- 41 Quoted by Lossky, Vladimir, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, p. 25.
- 42 See Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith*, p. 17.
- 43 See Lossky, Vladimir, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, pp. 217–49.
- 44 Perceptions of social responsibility also originate from and are attributed to the particular circumstances of any given society. What this point reiterates is their historical continuity (for God does not change) when these are solely inspired from an Orthodox Christian—religious—perspective and should not be confused with passive fatalism. For C. Wright Mills, fate is sociologically viewed in relation “with events in history that are beyond the control of any circle or groups of men compact enough to be identifiable, powerful enough to decide with consequence, and... so to be held accountable for historical events.” Yet, this concept of fate could not account for those perceptions emanating from a *communio in sacris* whose “tradition is not a static deposit but... it constantly assumes new forms, which ‘supplement the old without superseding them’.” C. Wright Mill’s concept of fate is cited in Lukes, Steven, *Power: A Radical View*, p. 56. The aforementioned definition of tradition is quoted by Meerson, Michael A., p. 28.
- 45 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 195–207.
- 46 See Bulgakov, Sergius Fr., *The Orthodox Church* (London: Centenary Press, 1935), p. 42.
- 47 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 264–67.
- 48 *Ibid*, p. 266.
- 49 *Ibid*, p. 267.
- 50 In terms of time the ecclesiastical calendar organises the whole year on the basis of the various stages of Christ’s life on earth, with a particular emphasis placed on the weekly and Easter cycles. This particular chronological sequence reiterates the religious significance of the Resurrection within the Orthodox dogma.
- 51 See Thual, François, *Η Κληρονομία του Βυζαντινίου: Γεωπολιτική της Ορθοδοξίας* (Original title: *Le douaire de Byzance*), (Athens: Εκδοσεις Ροές, 1999).

- 52 There is an apparent linguistic distance—not to be interpreted as a linguistic discontinuity—between the spoken and liturgical languages in most Orthodox Churches, springing from the use, for instance, of Old Slavonic and Byzantine forms of Greek.
- 53 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 264–65.
- 54 This point pertains to the fact that Orthodox communities have incorporated particular ritualistic forms—subject to the circumstances of their worshipping congregation. For example, the Ethiopian Church allows her local iconography to portray a Black *Theotokos*. In addition, Orthodoxy's ritual and/or liturgical content is not entirely mystical but rather propagates new practical forms for cleansing a community, from troublesome insects and animals to the blessing of a boat or train. See Every, G., *The Byzantine Patriarchate (451–1204)*, second edition (London, 1962), p. 198.
- 55 See Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith*, pp. 121–35.
- 56 See, Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 274–77.
- 57 In this context, the Orthodox sacraments imply that the Holy Spirit is offered to a free worshipping congregation and accordingly appeals for its reply.
- 58 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 274–75.
- 59 The Orthodox sacrament of repentance is essentially an invocation for forgiveness and for spiritual assistance and guidance upon which the organic enrolment of the individual believer is re-affirmed. This process of healing is “performed” as a private prayer (between the confessor—mostly a priest—and the penitent) which is not legalistic in nature, but rather reconciliatory, centred on the receipt of advice and absolution. The essence of this sacrament is springing from the Orthodox theological interpretation of sin, perceived as enslavement, through the free imitation of Adam's original guilt. *Ibid*, pp. 288–90.
- 60 Orthodoxy's Holy Orders are hierarchically identified with those of the Deacon, the Priest and the Bishop (episcopate) in addition to two minor and not commonly encountered ordinations—the Subdeacon and the lectorate. A bishop—in the Eucharistic liturgy—performs the ordination of the first two Holy Orders with the third one being also ceremonially confirmed in a liturgy, in the collegiate—episcopate—presence of two or more bishops. The present reference to the Orthodox Holy Orders is rather synoptic on the grounds that not all sacramental acts are of equal significance. For a more comprehensive study on this religious subject, including the important dichotomy between married and unmarried members of the clergy, Timothy Ware offers a very useful account (pp. 290–94) whereby Adrian Fortescue places an emphasis on the liturgical aspect of the *mysterion* (p. 422–23.)
- 61 The anthropocentric and healing nature of Orthodoxy also pervades the anointing of the sick (*ευχέλαιον*). This sacrament emphasises both the physical and metaphysical hypostases of the human being in the hope of recovery from illness and spiritual decay. Such a recovery is not necessarily reciprocal to the performative enactment of miracles—beyond the confines of scientific explanation—as the sacrament is often performed in preparation for death. However, the anointing of the sick also benefits other members of the Church

and to that end, is carried out on the evening of Holy Wednesday. See Ware, Timothy (pp. 296–97); and Fortescue, Adrian (p. 425).

62 See Ware, Timothy, pp. 274–75.

63 *Ibid.*

64 *Ibid.*, p. 276.

65 The present exegesis of the sacramental acts of Baptism and Chrismation follows the theological analysis provided by Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith*, pp. 124–35; Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 277–79; and Fortescue, Adrian, *The Orthodox Eastern Church* (London: The Catholic Truth Society, 1907), pp. 418–27.

66 In the Greek Orthodox tradition each believer is usually named after a saint, a religious practice that is not shared by the Slavonic Orthodox congregation. A genealogical lineage is created, as the baptised infant receives a Christian name which could be traced within the family's agnatic ancestry, placing the individual in the temporal—the religious calendar—content of the Church, through the celebration of a name day. This religious expression of ancestral respect has not been universally adhered to in recent years, as consideration of other—"secular"—name options gained prominence.

67 In contrast to the Augustine perception of original sin, the Orthodox Church does not hold the view that unbaptised infants are affected—impaired—and thus condemned to Hell.

68 The forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth and ears, chest, hands and the feet are marked in this sacrament. Timothy Ware attributes a reconciliatory character to the *mysterion* of Chrismation as the means of a dynamic enrolment for non-Orthodox confessional worshippers, or of re-enrolment for returning members to the Orthodox collectivity. See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 278–79.

69 *Ibid.*, p. 280.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 281.

71 The Orthodox rejection of transubstantiation (*metousiosis* in Greek) is briefly discussed by Meerson, Michael A., in "The Doctrinal Foundation of Orthodoxy", p. 23. The dogmatic significance of the concept is elaborated in the more comparative appraisal by Fortescue, Adrian *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, pp. 384–86, in an assessment that relies heavily on the definition of the term, as provided by the Synod of Jerusalem. This theological *mysterion* is concisely clarified by Timothy Ware's treatise on the Orthodox Church (p. 284) in which the usage of the concept is viewed as insufficient toward the comprehension of the unknowable nature of the sacrament.

72 Quoted by Meerson, Michael A., "The Doctrinal Foundation of Orthodoxy", p. 23.

73 See Evdokimov, Paul, *L'Orthodoxie*, p. 241.

74 See Ware, Timothy (pp. 294–96); and Fortescue, Adrian (pp. 424–25).

75 This synoptic analysis of Orthodox iconography has drawn upon the works—on the subject—by Ouspensky, Leonid and Lossky, Vladimir, *The Meaning of Icons* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982); Felmy, Karl Christian, "The Icon in Orthodox Theology and Devotion" in *The Art of Holy Russia: Icons*

- from *Moscow, 1400–1660* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1998), pp. 36–43; and finally, the exhibition catalogue, *Treasures of Mount Athos* (Thessaloniki: Ministry of Culture and the Museum of Byzantine culture, 1997), in particular the sections on monumental painting and portable and paper icons.
- 76 The essentially symbolic descent of heaven on earth is also manifested by the architectural inception of the ecclesiastical–Church–space, in particular by the construction of a large circular dome, which signifies the God–mankind union.
- 77 See Hastings, Adrian, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 1–34.
- 78 The concept of *ethnie*, as a referent of shared historical–ancestral–origins is developed by Smith, Anthony D., in *National Identity* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991).
- 79 See Ramet, Pedro, “Autocephaly and National Identity in Church–State Relations in Eastern Christianity: An Introduction” in Ramet, Pedro (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Vol. I. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988), pp. 3–19.
- 80 See Konstantinidi, Aristidi E., *Οι Ελληνικές λεξιεις στην αγγλική γλωσσα*, Second Edition (Thessaloniki, 1993), p. 56.
- 81 See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans Since 1453* (London: Hurst and Company, 2000), pp. 89–90.
- 82 See Papadakis, Aristeides, “The Historical Tradition of Church–State Relations under Orthodoxy” in Ramet, Pedro (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Vol. I. pp. 37–58.
- 83 Quoted by Geanakopoulos, Deno J., *Byzantium: Church, Society and Civilisation Seen through Contemporary Eyes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 136.
- 84 There is a wealth of bibliographical references that emphasise the national significance of Orthodoxy in the Balkan context. However, the existing treatises on the subject refer to Orthodoxy either as a sociological abstract–void of any distinctions of her doctrinal and functional content–or as a notional obstacle–a scapegoat–accountable for the region’s current state of affairs. On a general level, this “union” is elaborated by Kitromilides, Paschalis M., *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy: Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-Eastern Europe* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Variorum, 1994), *passim*; and also by Castoriades, Cornelius, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), pp. 12–13. In the case of the latter–considering Castoriades’ overall intellectual (Marxist) disposition–a picture is canvassed, equating Orthodoxy with ill-defined rationality–an endemic, social constant in the Balkans. On the Yugoslav context, this subject is only epidermically alluded to by Banac, Ivo, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 59–69. The Serbian ecclesiastical circumstances are discussed by Ramet, Pedro, “The Serbian Orthodox Church” in Ramet, Pedro (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Vol. I. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988), pp. 232–48. His analysis is purely empirical, concentrating solely on the structure of the Serbian ecclesiastical hierarchy–a readily observable “organisation”–without any apparent references to the

- substance and life of the congregation—a fact that limits the sociological application of his findings. Finally, the work of Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, (London: Hurst & Co., 2000) and Judah, Tim, *The Serbs: History, Myth & the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, second edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), (pp. 19–20) allow for very brief and broad mentions on Orthodoxy.
- 85 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, Second Edition (Athens: Παρουσια, 1999), pp. 175–99; Tarnanidi, Yoanni, *Ιστορία της Σερβικης Εκκλησιας*, Second Edition (Thessaloniki: Αφοι Κυριακιδη, 1998), pp. 11–47; Slijepcevic, Dj., *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve*, Vols. I. and II., (Munich: Iskra, 1962 and 1966).
 - 86 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 178–83.
 - 87 The confessional assimilation of the Serbs certainly enhanced their potential for cultural, social–political and military evolution within a Christian regional context. Pagan affinities may have hindered a similar course of development, without rendering its feasibility impossible—considering the later settlements of Jewish and Muslim populations.
 - 88 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 178–83.
 - 89 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 73–76.
 - 90 See Velimirovich, Nicholai, *The Life of St. Sava* (Crestwood: Saint Vladimiri's Seminary Press, 1989), *passim*; Dmitrijevic, Stevan, *Sv. Sava u narodnom verovanju i predanju* (Belgrade, 1926), *passim*; Stanojevic St., *Sveti Sava* (Beograd: Drzavne stamparije Kraljevine Jugoslavije, 1935), *passim*; *Sveti Sava: Sabrani spisi* (Belgrade: Prosveta Srpska Knjizevna Zadruga, 1986) *passim*; Corovic, Vladimir, *Sveti Sava u narodnom predanju* (Belgrade: Narodno Delo, 1990). On a broader–historical/ecclesiastical–level, see Slijepcevic, Dj., *Istorija srpske pravoslavne crkve*, pp. 33–141; Father Velimirovic, Nicholas, *Religion and Nationality in Serbia* (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1915); Cajkanovic, Vcelin, *Mit i religija u srba* (Belgrade: Srpska Knjizevna Zadruga, 1973), *passim*; and Hudal, Alois, *Die serbisch-orthodoxe Nationalkirche* (Graz: Universitäts-Buchdruckerei “Styria”, 1922), pp. 21–27.
 - 91 See Tachiaos, Anthony-Emil N., “Le monachisme serbe de Saint Sava et la tradition hésychaste athonite”, and “Uloga svetoga Save u okviru slovenske knjizevne delatnosti na svetoj Gori” in Tachiaos, Anthony-Emil N., *Greeks and Slavs: Cultural, Ecclesiastical and Literary Relations* (Thessaloniki: Kyriakidis Brothers, 1997), pp. 185–91 and 193–97.
 - 92 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 186–91.
 - 93 *Ibid*, pp. 195–200.
 - 94 The notion of “right circumstances” is springing from an earlier definition of religion—in the preceding chapter—as a primarily psychological–functional signifier of order and a source of personal and collective identification.
 - 95 See Tarnanidi, Yoanni, *Ιστορία της Σερβικης Εκκλησιας*, pp. 29–47.
 - 96 See Eliade, Mircea, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, pp. 20–65.

- 97 This is a very important point deserving further elucidation. The implication is a universal and structural one, that all collectivities need a focus, which is a reference of the constitutive cement and a sacralised source of power (taboo and prohibition). Its significance originates in the monotheistic substance of Christianity, which generates more powerful foci than, for example, Hinduism and probably more cohesive concepts of the self under modernity. This strong sense of "centre" is translated into its secular, modern vision of the condensed political, cultural and military power and because of the "inherited" cognitive paradigm, is much easier to naturalise.
- 98 In fact, the majority of the national Serbian saints were members of the Nemanjic lineage. See Anzulovic, Branimir, *Heavenly Serbia*, p. 24.
- 99 Quoted by Blagojevic, Milos, "On the National Identity of the Serbs in the Middle Ages" in Samardzic, Radovan and Duskov, Milan (eds.), *Serbs in European Civilisation* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1993), Institute for Balkan Studies, p. 29.
- 100 Quoted by Banac, Ivo, *The National Question in Yugoslavia*, p. 67.
- 101 The concepts of *morphogenesis* and *morphostasis* are primarily used in the physical sciences and are attributed to Maruyama, Magoroh, "The Second Cybernetics: Deviation-Amplifying Mutual Causal Process" in *American Scientist*, Vol. 51, No. 2, June 1953, p. 174. Hans Mol in his treatise, *Identity and the Sacred* (p. 21), introduces the same terminology in the context of religion and identity formation.
- 102 This is a Greek technical term from computing science, which refers to the process of formatting, that is the manner in which something is arranged to comply with a specific input.
- 103 Quoted by Heidegger, Martin, *Basic Writings*, from a revised and expanded edition edited by Krell, David Farrell (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 356. This quotation forms a part of Heidegger's lecture "Building Dwelling Thinking" in which a new way of contemplating the position of man in relation to things is sought.
- 104 Various references and sources could support this particular claim including the following quotation by arch-priest Bozidar Mijac in which an explanatory account of the significance of Kosovo to the Serbs is provided. "The Serbian homeland is composed of heaven and earth. It is the essence of the spirit in time and space. It is the highest proof that the number of inhabitants is not crucial for determining to whom a patch of soil belongs." (*Pravoslavlje*, No. 388, 15 May 1983).
- 105 The human person is to be seen in holistic terms, as an integral unity of soul and the material (physical) hypostasis, rendering the dead body, an object of love, not of abhorrence. As Orthodoxy is convinced that the body is sanctified and transfigured together with the soul, an immense reverence for the relics of the saints permeates her practice—not the fruit of ignorance or superstition, but originating in a highly developed theology of the body. Similar beliefs are prevalent in the burial rites of the congregation. Traditionally, after a period of three to seven years (depending on the soil of the burial cite) the families of the deceased exhume the skeleton, which is then cleansed in wine—

- alluding to the parable of the good Samaritan and also the ritual involved in the "burial" of Christ. The soul is then committed to eternal rest.
- 106 The locality of a territorial claim, through the presence of buried ancestors—particularly of national saints—is further discussed in Brown, Peter, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in late Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
 - 107 Quoted by Verdery, Katherine, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Post-Socialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p. 28.
 - 108 An indicative expression of this disposition is provided by the ecclesiastical constitution of Serbia, adopted in 1957. Among the various statutory articles, the Cyrillic form is acknowledged as the official liturgical and instructive language (article 4) and the official flag of the Church shares the same three colours—red, blue and white—with that of the Serb state—in addition to a golden cross and torches (article 4). See Tarnanidi, Yoanni, *Ιστορία της Σερβικής Εκκλησίας*, pp. 143–51.
 - 109 Quoted by Mol, Hans, *Identity and the Sacred*, p. 206.
 - 110 The celebration of the Orthodox Easter is chronologically determined by the council of Nicaea (325) as the first Sunday after the full moon, which proceeds from the spring equinox. In addition, the Orthodox Easter always follows, never coincides or precedes, the Jewish Passover. See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 298–303 and Fortescue, Adrian, pp. 398–401.
 - 111 See Eliade, Mircea, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Or, Cosmos and History*, translated from the French by Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Series XLVI (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 51–92.
 - 112 Quoted by Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1972), p. 110.
 - 113 See French, R. M., *Serbian Church Life* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1942), pp. 51–55; Cajkanovic, Veselin, *Mit i religija u srba, passim*; Vukovic, Milan, *Narodni obicaj, verovanja i poslovice kod srba* (Belgrade: Knizar i Antikvar, 1978), pp. 99–125; and Bandic, Dusan, *Narodna religija srba u 100 pojmovima* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1991), pp. 350–60.
 - 114 This historical fact pertains to the small number of related archaeological findings, due to the limited life of the materials used, and their subsequent and systematic destruction in the period of Christianisation. See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδόξων Εκκλησιών Βουλγαρίας και Σερβίας*, pp. 176–78.
 - 115 See Stamkos, Yorgos and Kosanovic, Milica, *Μυστική Σερβία* (Thessaloniki: Εκδόσεις APXETYPIO, 1999), *passim*; Bandic, Dusan, *Narodna religija srba u 100 pojmovima*, pp. 19–222; Cupurdija, Branko, *Agrarna magija u tradicionalnoj kulturi srba*, Knjiga 23 (Belgrade: Etnografski Institut Srpske Akademije Nauka i Umetnosti, 1982), *passim*; Znaienko, Myroslava T., *The Gods of Ancient Slavs* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1980), *passim*; and Antonijevic, Drago-slav, *Obredi i obicaji balkanskih stocara*, Knjiga 16 (Belgrade: Etnografski Institut Srpske Akademije Nauka i Umetnosti, 1982), pp. 116–70.
 - 116 See Kulisic, S., Petrovic, Z. and Pantelic, N., *Srpski mitoloski recnik*, (Belgrade: Nolit, 1970), pp. 175–78.

- 117 See Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*, p. 110.
- 118 *Ibid*, pp. 112–14.
- 119 *Ibid*.
- 120 *Ibid*.
- 121 See Flere, Sergej, “Denominational Affiliation in Yugoslavia: 1931–1987” in *East European Quarterly*, XVV, No. 2, June 1991, p. 149.
- 122 *Ibid*, *passim*. Sergej Flere offers a cumulative account of the various studies on the subject of religiosity in Yugoslavia.
- 123 See Ramet, Pedro, “Factionalism in Church-State Interactions” in *Slavic Review*, Summer 1985, p. 301.
- 124 See Flere, Sergej, “Denominational Affiliation in Yugoslavia: 1931–1987” in *East European Quarterly*, XVV, No. 2, June 1991, pp. 149–61.
- 125 It is my personal view that in the context of Yugoslav communism, residues and cognitive precepts of religion have affected the values and attitudes of the leadership and have contributed to the constitution of Serbian socialism and of communist stereotypes.
- 126 See Flere, Sergej, “Denominational Affiliation in Yugoslavia: 1931–1987”, p. 157.
- 127 Sergej Flere makes an interesting contribution in the debate of religious affinity by reiterating the social prominence of the Yugoslav secular project in the determination of perceptions of personal identity. In this context, he holds the view that “because of the socially favoured position of this attitude (non-traditionalist-modernist) doubts as to its depth, sincerity or truthfulness may be raised.” *Ibid*, p. 146.
- 128 Religious precepts have survived the communist experience as a belief to a metaphysical referent (God), which is nurtured by societal customs—within the Orthodox affinitive context of the locality—and the prominence of ancestral convictions. The adherence to the faith is encapsulated in variable forms, as a belief that is stronger than any atheist dispositions, depended on the presence and providence of the Creator, or importantly, conferred upon the community through the wisdom and dedication of their forefathers. See Bandic, D., *Carstvo zemaljsko i carstvo nebesko*, pp. 257–78.
- 129 Quoted by Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 309.
- 130 Quoted by Radic, Radmila, “The Church and the ‘Serbian Question’” in Popov, Nebojsa (ed.), *The Road to War in Serbia: Trauma and Catharsis*, pp. 265–66.
- 131 An elucidatory note is due at this stage of my analysis, before the preceding argumentation is abased to an apologetic disposition toward Serbian Orthodoxy. As it has already been suggested, the nationalisation of the religious cause—in terms of the autocephalous status of the Church—tends to weaken her position, as she becomes part of the “profane” project of the state. With regard to the relationship of Serbian Orthodoxy with Catholicism and Islam, the explanation should be sought within Orthodoxy’s definition, as the catholic communion of right belief and worship. This of course does not preclude the appreciation of other denominations (for example, Anglicanism; Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 317–21). However, the Orthodox-Catholic rela-

tion involves doctrinal differences and the historical legacy of the schism. In this context, it should be mentioned that the related matter of religious violence in Yugoslavia is not ignored and is elucidated upon in a proceeding chapter (sixth). At this point of my thesis, Orthodoxy is perceived as the essence of the various hypostases of the Serbian being and as an esoteric part of the perception of the self and of others, upon which ontological and cosmological references are constructed.

- 132 See Kazantzakis, Nikos, *Christ Recrucified*, English translation by Jonathan Griffin (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1962). The term *romiosini* connotes to a sense of self-identification that is solely Greek.
- 133 Having defined Orthodoxy as the sacralisation of the Serbian identity and the ensuing forms of a collective being as an “imagined community”, it follows that a minimum religious content, even in the purely metaphysical form of existential anxieties, is present in every member of the national collectivity. Under these circumstances, the permeative nature of religion functions in a similar manner to one’s genetic material—metaphorically speaking. Different predispositions remain always a part of one’s genetic constitution (*ousia*), but their expression is subject to the conditions experienced, including the socio-political, cultural, “natural” and economic environment. The issue of popular religiosity in Serbia is elaborated on the basis of informal discussions (along a similar line) by Bandic, Dusan, *Carstvo zemaljsko i carstvo nebesko*, pp. 227–78.

CHAPTER THREE

HOMO SERBICUS

DEFINING THE NATURE AND RELATIONSHIPS OF THE “CREATURE”

Synopsis: *The principal aim of this chapter is to locate the moral and ethical content of Serbian Orthodoxy in both the personal nature and the inter-personal affiliations of Homo Serbicus (and of Femina Serbica), in other words, to decipher the Orthodox precepts of collective subjectivity into the binary of individual and relational manifestations. The justificatory grounds for this particular line of argumentation pertain to the preceding analysis of the main hypothesis that accepted Orthodoxy as the sacralisation of the Serbian identity. Having established the circumstances and dialectics of their union–fusion—and, in the process, correlated identity with order, the hypothesis is focused on the concrete moral values and ethical references of the Serbian individual.*

This subject matter is approached, initially, on a broader level, in which the human being is the primal referent. To that end, the analysis consists of the Orthodox doctrine, as the sanctified origins of a righteous belief and Serbian epic poetry, as the coherent and literary expression of communal consciousness. The ensuing moral and ethical values are then placed within particular forms of kinship–family—and the roles that are accordingly allocated to Homo Serbicus and Femina Serbica. The argumentation is completed with the consideration of the findings in connection with the concept or rather the actuality of a Balkan mentality.

The Moral and Ethical Construction of the Serbian Cosmology

The Orthodox experience, as the primordial factor of Serbianhood, nurtures upon doctrinal and functional precepts, distinctive cultural and institutional patterns that provide a sense of “protection” and of national be-

longing to its members. This sense of protection pertains to divinely sanctioned exegeses, concerned with human origins and behaviour and in particular, with the Manichean distinction between good and evil, right and wrong. Orthodoxy as a signifier of collective representation, crystallises rules, symbols, behavioural inducements and consequences for actions, whose justification is also reflected in the internal necessities and functional core of the Serbian society. The creation of forms and norms of conduct are forged upon the shared conviction that individual salvation should not be pursued in an antinomic and anti-social manner.

To that end, the earthly hypostases and duties of the human being are intertwined with the spiritual and metaphysical nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our profane existence constitutes an aspect of the human-divine communion, in which God's ultimate authority is manifested in subordinate and earthly forms of jurisdiction. Both, individuals and society, commonly hold the need for moral values. If perceptions of the former differ significantly in what is valued and desired, then the institution of the latter is abased to a crowd writ large. This notion of volitional conformity to moral assent emanates from the Orthodox belief, assigning the free will and freedom to personhood, upon which the synergetic character of the *communio in sacris* evolves. In this context, the natural environment provides the raw materials of human existence while the institution of society and, more importantly, the ecclesiastical congregation are the formalised and spiritual expressions of human nature.

The precept of sociability is, according to Durkheim,¹ a part of the human essence, manifested in the desire to live within a society where the individual sense of justice and the virtue of good are also collectively expressed in institutions. Yet, this perception of justice should not be solely interpreted in the strict form of legal adherence and disciplinary penitence, as the Orthodox experience of the divine is one of catholicity and not of axiomatic rigidity. Orthodoxy's faith is distinctively different from Judaism's original consideration that sprung from the Hebrew concept for religion, *dath*, denoting "law", as the observance of concrete, delineated actions.² As it has already been suggested, Orthodoxy cannot be reduced to a symbolic, ritual or for that matter, legal hypostasis. Her holistic essence permeates the societal nature of the worshipping community and in the case of Serbia, constructs non-negotiable truth-claims, whereby personal or communal beliefs are not subjected to circumstantial justifications.

Hence, when considering the moral and ethical construction of Serbianhood, an important distinction should be drawn between the traditions of

Orthodoxy and orthopraxy.³ Orthopraxy pertains to a righteous action (*praxis*), which may be either religiously induced, through references to faith or ritual enactment, or may emerge from specific social or historical conditions. In the Serbian social context, Orthodoxy's holistic nature places an emphasis on the continuity of her living Tradition over the mere pursuit of orthopraxis—the latter being a part but not the essence of the former. A concrete example of orthopraxy within Orthodoxy would be the religious practice of abstinence from all meat products⁴ on Wednesdays and Fridays, in addition to the main periods of fasting in the ecclesiastical year.⁵ This expression of religious commitment is of a righteous character (orthopraxis), however, as a signifier of a complete human essence, (physical and metaphysical) it is only an expression of the Orthodox faith. Moreover, due to the contemporary demands placed upon the individual Orthodox believer, the strict application of this traditional principle is often met with certain dispensations.

These dispensations correlate to the freedom conferred upon man by His Creator and the Orthodox Tradition, which assumes new forms—while inwardly changeless—without superseding the old. The same freedom is also evoked in the choice between good and evil, or right and wrong. The presence of this radical dualism in the life of the faithful raises the question of evil and of its purpose in a world created by an omnipotent-omniscient God. Orthodoxy emphasises, through the sacrifice of the Son, the restoration of the human-divine communion and the ultimate redemption manifested in eternal life. The presence of evil as the social juxtaposition of good is attributed to the original sin, which introduced “desire” and “concupiscence” into human existence.⁶ One's ability to do evil originates in the fall from a previously perfect state, whose preceding and proceeding natures are though less exalted in Orthodoxy. In consequence, man's gradual progression into an awareness of a moral-spiritual existence is forged within an environment that allows for the maturation of his innate potential. The realisation and maximisation of these righteous values presuppose the option and presence of evil,⁷ as a signifier of the human freedom—in terms of conscious decisions—in the pursuit of variable opportunities.

In Orthodoxy's view, the primary reasons for the creation of the human being and the ensuing prospect of redemption pertain to acts of love rather than of justice. This theological conviction is also prevalent—to a certain extent—in the metaphysical concept of heaven and hell.⁸ The former is neither an eschatological option nor a form of reward for ritual commit-

ment and for the virtue of perseverance through undeserved hardships. Life in the Kingdom of Heaven⁹ is instead the cumulative experience of the human-divine communion, founded upon the free will, with which humankind was bestowed. Similarly, the “construction” of hell is indicative of the choices and misuse of individual freedom, culminating to the “rejection” of God. This particular perception does not seek to distil Orthodoxy’s notion of God into a mono-dimensional assumption of dejection, fear and punishment. The human relationship with God is instead focused on His love of mankind while judgement refers to the Second Coming of Christ.¹⁰

The significance of this dualism is manifested in perceptions of order, which contribute to society’s protection from anomie, while maintaining its legitimate coherence. The religious interpretation of order is distilled in the precept of reciprocity that projects personal expectations into the behavioural treatment of others—“all things... ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets”.¹¹ Within Orthodoxy’s essence, order is defined as a moral and ethical content, which reconciles the binary of individual and social existence through common worship, ritual, objectification and commitment. The need for moral guidance and prescriptions for social acceptance and motivation are conciliated through the transcendental character of Orthodoxy, which reiterates the integrative principles of the community. This dialectical process then involves the projection of human agency in the broader context of human existence.

Religious assumptions and human virtue are reciprocal notions—according to John Oman—in that, “religion without morality lacks a solid earth to walk on, [and] morality, without religion, lacks a wide heaven to breathe in”.¹² Orthodoxy, as a coherent system of meaning, certainly conveys the significance of moral “regulations”, which are consistent with the nature of her congregation. However, a dilemma arises from this presumption, pertaining to the appreciation of the Orthodox experience, in terms of her essence, or rather her various hypostases—the latter being inclusive of an ethical-moral content.¹³ For the Orthodox worshipper, salvation or redemption are not direct derivatives of discernible ethical principles and moral sanctions that abase the human being to a mechanical or lackadaisical adherent of divine orders. Orthodoxy is constituted upon gnosis and its pursuit stems from free will and not in mimesis. When applied in the Serbian context, with its fairly differentiated structures, a question arises as to whether social cohesion is advanced through religiously induced norms of decency and discipline.

The diachronic endurance of Orthodoxy relates to her capacity to connect human inner qualities and metaphysical anxieties to an ultimate and non-mundane referent. Orthodoxy, as the sacralisation of the Serbian identity, establishes a normative and cognitive system upon concrete spatial, temporal, historical and religious principles that impact on the processes of stabilisation and integration. These transcendental references of an orderly cosmology are not, however, immune to the circumstantially induced malaise of moral relativism and rigidity. Perceptions of *ought to* or *do not touch* are phenomena directly attributed to the aforementioned assumption. Their exegesis—though—correlates to the adoption of a particular point of view.

From an external perspective, Serb moral relativism or rigidity are identified with the construction of a closed Orthodox cosmology that solely pertains to visions of a divinely ordained people and their destiny. Certain members of the Serbian collectivity who experience Orthodoxy as a strict and reciprocated ritual commitment share this “esoteric” form of identification. On both accounts, the sociological interpretation would be that Orthodoxy, as an overarching system of belief, sacralises and integrates Serbianhood in response to anomie and disorder,¹⁴ which emanate from the collapse of state structures and the trauma of war. Under these conditions, a sense of Orthodox, affiliative homogeneity reiterates the confidence and assurance of human relations and expectations.

Yet, the foregoing supposition does not entirely reconcile the physical and spiritual nature of the human being. When considering the phenomena of moral rigidity and relativism, their social impact and scope is measured in relation to the process of *morphopoiisi*. In other words, the moral and ethical significance of concrete religious values—sacrifice, abstinence, penitence—does not permeate equally the great variety of human relations in Serbia. Certain people place a greater emphasis on their earthly rather than metaphysical-spiritual existence, as an expression of their free will and freedom. To assume otherwise would be erroneous on two different, reductive accounts.

The first of these reintroduces the fundamentalist discourse in the analysis, in the—notional—fusion of the Serbian Orthodox reality with strict moral cohesion or rigidity. This particular point is further reiterated by Mircea Eliade’s understanding of fundamentalism, as “the reduction of all possible significations to only one proclaimed ‘fundamental’”.¹⁵ It follows that the equation and elevation of moral opinions to the sole substance of Serbian Orthodoxy is not feasible in the absence of dogmatic scriptural

appraisals in a differentiated social environment. Orthodoxy's decipherment into moral or ethical prescriptions reduces the former to concrete forms of orthopraxis. Efforts to systematise and codify the essence of the Orthodox faith into moral and axiomatic dogmas—of an obligatory character—are profoundly reductive and appropriate to a purely legalistic notion of religion.¹⁶

Orthodoxy does not pertain to perennial repetitions of ethical archetypes in order to morally improve the individual believer and consolidate profane behavioural norms. Her anthropocentric nature evolves upon the free participation in the human–divine communion, which is received as the Grace of God.¹⁷ This metaphysical and ideal position is socially expressed through the ethical principle of “love”, as a signifier of collective motivation and therefore of the defence of values and of a communal identity. The aforementioned “love ethic”, in its volitional expression, constitutes an important aspect of the moral content—whether instinctively or religiously induced—needed for the constitution of a society and of its cosmology. Subject to this moral precept, society is forged upon a contractual¹⁸ and voluntary basis, in which man preserves plausible notions of autonomy, duty, responsibility and ultimate points of reference. Orthodoxy is hence substantiated in terms of human consent based on free will, and as the sacralisation of a collective—for instance, Serbian—identity, she presupposes the presence of an esoteric, agapeistic moral content¹⁹ as the source of both commitment and motivation.

This moral content, as an innate part of the Serbian cosmology, is then historically²⁰ expressed, embodied and advanced. This view does not seek to distil the Serbian Orthodoxy into specific historical manifestations of ethical principles. Instead, it locates her “eternal” nature within the dynamic character of Serbian societal evolution.

*Homo Serbicus*²¹

Their historical and territorial hypostases

The historical and territorial hypostases of the Serbian being are of a rather “contemporary” character, when chronologically placed in the broader Balkan context. The origins of the tautological relationship of these two integral properties of Serbianhood are traced to early medieval times. Historical accounts on the subject of their arrival in the region refer to a process of gradual infiltration into the Danube Valley,²² which became

numerically significant in the fourth century AD. Their settlement in the Balkan areas of Byzantium began in the sixth century, as part of an invasion.²³ Constantine Porphyrogenitus' recollections²⁴ of the Serb presence attribute their partial southward migration to the political decision of a tribal leader. In view of this development, Emperor Heraclius granted them the area of Serblia—around Thessaloniki—but their colonisation was of a short duration, due to the nostalgia for their northern, ancestral lands.²⁵

Following from migratory movements to the north and south of the Danube, the Serbian²⁶ peoples finally were allowed to settle in the regions of Raska—in the south-west of the current Republic of Serbia—and Duklja—the spatial core of the Montenegrin Kingdom.²⁷ In return, they acknowledged the Byzantine suzerainty and agreed to an annual tribute.

In their ensuing social evolution, the Serbian tribes gradually progressed from invaders to settlers through the cultivation of land, establishing in the process their Balkan roots in areas which remain still in their possession. While their territorial presence concretised within a region delineated by the Adriatic Sea and the Danube, their organisational structures remained politically loose and scattered.²⁸ The Serbian “cause” was further hindered by their spatial placement between the spheres of influence of Catholicism and Orthodoxy—the former being embraced by neighbouring South Slavs. Serbian unity was finally cemented by Stefan I Nemanjić (1114–1200), who ensured his country's independence against a weakened Byzantium.²⁹ Once a Serbian physical substance crystallised, the Orthodox metaphysical–spiritual hypostasis followed upon the confirmation of the Church's autocephalous status (1219).

The “unified” Serbs then embarked, under the guidance of the Nemanjić dynasty, on a process of expansion. The Macedonian region was absorbed by the Serbian medieval state, which rose to political–spatial prominence during Tsar Stefan IV Dusan's reign (1308–55). The territorial jurisdiction of his medieval kingdom extended from Western Thrace to the Drina river and from the Danubian basin to Central Greece. Further to the country's geographical enlargement, its administrative character was consolidated through the increased authority of the Patriarchate in Pec and the introduction of imperial codes (*Zakonnik*) of organisation.³⁰ However, the prominence of the Serbian Empire gradually subsided into a fragmented conglomerate of various entities—shared among Tsar Dusan's successors—before it came to an abrupt conclusion at the battle of Kosovo. On 15 June 1389, at Kosovo Polje (Field of the Blackbirds), the Serbian peoples were

subjected to a heavy military defeat³¹ that signalled a prolonged period of occupation.

Although chronologically distant, memories from the medieval Serbian past form the essential core of the historical and territorial hypostases of *Homo Serbicus*. Through the mere awareness of a consistent spatial vision of Serbianhood—albeit a remote one—signifiers of collective representation are produced, according to the cognitive and orientational demands of the community. The nation's measurable abilities are narrowed on the basis of their socialising or indoctrinating function, rather than their historical accuracy, whose importance is not always paramount. Temporal considerations are accorded a liminal nature upon which the present is validated and assessed and the future would be constructed. Spatial perceptions of boundaries circumscribe the “physical” substance of the nation in a series of historically intertwined, nameable locations that designate the itinerary of the ancestral lineage. In consequence, a permanent point of reference is created—historically and territorially—allowing the Serbian individual and his society to negotiate and manipulate the incongruities between the expectations and exigencies of life.

These finite and conditioned referents of the Serbian medieval existence are conferred with the “positive” values of an exemplary paradigm, which encapsulates the essence of the Serbian being in its entirety. The mythopoeic qualities of this distant, yet humanised and dignified past constitute a discursive field, which grants a sense of meaning to the historical and territorial hypostases of *Homo Serbicus*. As a community, which has occupied a certain territory for a prolonged period of time, the Serbian peoples can function as a comprehensive collectivity, capable of addressing the historical and territorial needs of its members. Importantly, the Serbian medieval experience—as a signifier of national representation—crystallises on a collective level, on concrete notions of statehood, territoriality and the values of honour, freedom and respect, in the defence of enduring societal norms. In this thematical context it should be noted that the diachronic impact of these assumptions stems from the correlation of their profane and sacred hypostases.

The interpretative and locative importance of these evaluative precepts is reaffirmed, in the subsequent social-historical evolution of Serbianhood. This applies to the Serbian nation in its entirety—for those sections, which remained under Ottoman rule and others, who later migrated to areas of Habsburg or Venetian authority. On either count, these perceptions permeated the societal passage from feudal to patriarchal forms of organisation.

The chronological placement of the Serbian feudal society is tautological with the medieval Nemanjić State, which incorporated hierarchical structures within a coherent spatial framework. Their sociological signification was manifested in the agricultural–pastoral modes of the economy and the individual participation within a single (*inokosna*) or a joint (*zadruga*) family unit.³² In the absence of adequate protection against the impact of the Ottoman occupation, *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* sought security in these forms of social and kinship identification. Their constitutive aspects were encapsulated and preserved in folk epic songs (*pesme*), which condensed a glorious past in cultural and educational patterns for the Serbian collectivity. This spatial–temporal form of knowledge contributed to the transcending essence of Serbianhood.

In consequence, the Serbian genealogy was thematically placed within the national historical and territorial context. Their relational character to the medieval past was forged upon the decipherment of factual and mythical elements into the recurrent evaluative precepts of honour,³³ Orthodoxy, freedom and independence. These “ideals” delineate every subsequent historical experience. In the *Vojna Krajina* (“the military frontier”), the Serbian peoples were the defenders of a porous borderland. The national uprisings in the nineteenth century manifested the strong desire for independence that was constructed as a historical derivative of medieval statehood. Closed patterns of Serbian kinship—emphasising the influence of the collective entity over an individualistic ethos—found their social–political expression in the preference of unitary structures for the Kingdom of Croats, Serbs and Slovenes, which later became Yugoslavia. Subject to their Orthodox faith, *Homo Serbicus* endured an extensive process of extermination during the Second World War, at the hands of the Ustasha regime.³⁴ The trauma of victimisation and the integral sacrificial aspect of their historical and territorial hypostases have since survived to the present day.³⁵

Personal and collective notions of Serbianhood are reciprocal to a concrete spatial–temporal core upon which the actual converges with the imaginary and social values are determined. The proceeding values,³⁶ as a key construct of *Homo Serbicus*, are indicative of the interaction between the Orthodox faith and the historical and temporal account of the profane in the Serbian epic poetry. Their particular depiction does not preclude individual variations. In fact, the attribution of a shared mentality is justified on the basis of their recurrent and pervasive character.³⁷

The “Love Ethic”

“To love your neighbour as yourself”³⁸

Among the evaluative principles of *Homo Serbicus*, the “love ethic” underlines the volitional–contractual character that permeates the essence of a human collectivity, including those closely affiliated with precepts of a religious belief. Although societal expressions and depictions of love are deemed theologically³⁹ indispensable to man, the manifestations of this postulate are variable and often imprecise. An interpretive leeway is afforded, when considering the agapeistic moral content, identified in the preceding part of the analysis as a source of social commitment and motivation.

The religious exegesis of this ethical principle connotes to the constitution of the human–divine communion, upon a perception of unselfish love. In other words, the spiritual and moral advancement of the human being relates to spontaneous and unmotivated action, whose terminal point of reference is oriented toward other members of the society. Social relationships marked by amity advance a sense of fellowship and solidarity, contributing to the ethical fulfilment of personhood. This unilateral expression of the love ethic presupposes a sustained individual commitment and abnegation. To that end, this religiously induced form of respect precludes the manipulation and use of others as a means of personal progression. Underscored by the receptive nature of the human relation to God, the “love ethic” transcends all spatial–temporal limitations and assumes an enduring presence in social and individual experiences alike. As a permanent signifier of personal and collective action, this perception of love restores the true essence of man, as according to Orthodoxy, in the absence of the love of God there could be no love of a fellow human being (*πλησιον*) or neighbour.⁴⁰

Of course, this purely religious interpretation of the love ethic would remain elliptical and highly idealised without additional considerations of the profane human substance. The experience of the love ethic involves an individual dimension of it in the form of love or respect of oneself. Its scope and depth is gradually acquired through the act of living and the contained–variable–occurrences or happenings, commencing with the most profound expression of a mother’s affection and protection to her child. This unique bond constitutes the first concrete manifestation of love, which is derived from a unilateral and an abnegated perspective. When “transferred” into the context of social reasoning, it ideally invokes a re-

ciprocated understanding of conduct that projects personal expectations to the behavioural treatment of others. Thus a measure of mutual purpose permeates the fellowship and relations of human beings.⁴¹

However, the presumption of a religiously induced, egalitarian treatment of fellow-citizens is of a rather abstract and sociologically unsound nature. Individual experiences or perceptions of religiosity are variable, so to presuppose the salience of a divinely sanctioned love would be at least reductive. This is further clarified through the consideration of Plato's *Euthyphro*, which raises the question, as to "whether something is holy because the gods approve of it or... they approve of it because it is holy".⁴² Upon this assumption it could be suggested that the societal importance of the love ethic is not solely justified as a preordained and sanctified referent. Regardless of its "origins", it is an important social element that emanates primarily from the human need for sociability. Under these conditions, human beings establish intricate relations, in which notions of sharing and giving oscillate according to their substance—family, friendships, or mere acquaintances.

For *Homo Serbicus* the significance of an agapeistic moral content also pertains to functional exegeses on the creation of social solidarity and fellowship, which may be inclusive of individual or collective Orthodox connotations.⁴³ On this basis, personal norms of social conduct and behaviour may be forged and more intricate relational forms may be both pursued and constructed.

Honour

"May your name be renowned in the world
for heroism and honourable reputation"⁴⁴

The multifaceted notion of honour concretises historical, emotional, behavioural and social references of conduct, upon which precepts of social membership are delineated for *Homo Serbicus*, while constructing perceptions of the self, subjected to a collective judgement. On a broader level, the concept of honour pertains to an evaluative process, involving the internalisation of societal values to each member of the community and the externalisation of personal attributes in the social spectrum. The variety of meanings, conveyed by honour, is reflected in the etymological wealth of interpretations. Honour denotes individual integrity, an outward sign of respect and esteem, a consideration for moral principles and a state of personal consciousness.⁴⁵

Within the Serbian social and historical context, the notion of honour has gradually evolved from a referent of primarily personal evaluation to a correlative signifier of collective representation. The cultural documentation of this evolutionary process is crystallised in the nation's epic poetry. Although the circumstances which inspired its creation were certainly different to present conditions, its validity—as a genealogical inheritance of Serbianhood—remains undiminished in the extraction of particular conclusions. These conclusions do not seek to distil the essence of the Serbian being into conservative and traditional evaluative substances, but rather to construct a spatial-temporal account of their individual and collective experiences.

Historically, personal perceptions of honour⁴⁶ related mostly to the defence of possessions and symbols, belonging to the men of the feudal Serbian society. Social status was the determinant factor upon which honour was granted, from the higher to the lower strata. In the sixteenth century, during the period of militarisation, notions of honour in *Vojna Krajna* developed under the increased patriarchal influences of the time. By its nature the patriarchal society bestowed upon only an adult male the moral worth of honour and dignity. The depth and scope of these attributes were correlated to the traits and qualities of the individual male and of his lineage. As a contributing factor to personal honour, the social placement of the family was of partial significance. The enhancement, preservation or loss of such a dignified value depended solely on the individual male himself. Yet, this social presumption should not be confused with the precepts of “possessive individualism”, which regarded the human being as “the proprietor of his own person or capacities, owing nothing to society for them”.⁴⁷ Personal honour was confined in the parameters of the social, ethical cosmology⁴⁸ that were concretised in the jurisdiction of local communities and assemblies. In response to this imposition of a moral consensus, honour and dignity were congruent with the collectivity and hence their individual pursuit was synonymous with the advancement of communal causes and ideals, in acts of sacrifice, abnegation and heroism.

Any deviation from the socially sanctioned precepts of honour resulted into condemnation. The precise nature of social judgement was reciprocal to the purpose and origins of the committed action. When honour and dignity were *earned* through military prowess, the act of treason was countered by punitive measures of shame,⁴⁹ as all adult men were the recipients of *vera*⁵⁰ in matters of armed defence.

Religiously induced honour was nurtured upon the intertwined postu-

lates of individual (human) destiny and sociability. The notion of honour pertained to an awareness of certainty, originating in the observance of Orthodox morality in family and social issues. Under these conditions, the antipodes of sin⁵¹ and dishonour were societal expressions of ethical transgressions that undermined the cohesion of the family—infidelity, or abuse of trust—and burdened the project of social harmony. Personal honour, as a possession of genealogical inheritance, was often valued with blood,⁵² whose significance was emphasised in the transactions and pursuit of its defence.⁵³

Through the immortality of memory, these historical accounts of honour are invariably present in the life of the Serbian being. The formulation of these perceptions emanates from the historical and territorial hypostases of Serbianhood, as these are concretised in the more significant incidents of the national existence like for example, in the cult of the Kosovo battle. Honour is accorded to the defence of the family's integrity, of national customs, of the country's ideals and territory and of Orthodoxy, as the sacralisation of the Serbian identity, particularly in moments of crisis.

Of course, processes of social differentiation have impacted on the nature and applications of this notion that is no longer confined to Serbian men. On a personal level, honour refers to the autonomy and integrity of personhood, as a signifier of social commitment. For *Homo Serbicus* honour also involves individual advancement—educational, social or professional—, family life, economic privileges, religious righteousness or acts of heroism, sacrifice and abnegation. These beliefs are externalised through the symbolic representations of Serbian honour, vested within the national flag, anthem, territory, values and all the insignia, which then internalise this shared ideal in each individual member of the community.

The Concept of Heroism

Within the notional scope of honour, heroism distinguishes a social member upon the basis of exceptional courage, fortitude, nobility or even an exalted perception of superior qualities in any field. Social esteem and recognition are accordingly bestowed on the individual, whose exemplary actions emphasise the importance of the collective entity over the personal existence.

Serbian heroism is historically congruent with the “physical” defence of the national territory, customs and ideas, which comprise the essence of

Serbianhood. References to heroes or heroic acts are numerous and recurrent in Serb epic poetry.⁵⁴ In its thematical interpretations of ancestral events, the violent struggle of the Serbian patriarchal society against Islam is the foundation on which heroism and heroes are determined. Heroism is manifested in the courage of the fighter in the battlefield and also in the defence of the oppressed and the weak. In their heroic pursuits, these “exemplary” individuals are protecting personal and collective honour and most importantly, through suffering, they uphold the principles of the Orthodox faith against an enemy of a different ethno-confessional nature. To that end, religiously induced acts of heroism are imbued with the highest collective acknowledgement and public respect.

The societal importance of Serbian heroes is apparent in the construction of ideal precepts of personhood, which can inspire and motivate, to a greater or lesser extent, their community. This highly principled and altruistic perception of human nature nurtures the enduring re-enactment of Serb honour, defined by personal sacrifice and abnegation. In other words, heroism is socially validated for its emotive significance, as a means of internal cohesion and inspiration for the Serbian nation. The ultimate reference, in this process, is the eternal life granted to the heroic individual, whose action defended the honour and Orthodox faith of Serbianhood. As a part of a heroic act, sacrifice emphasises the connective relation of the physical and metaphysical hypostases of man. Through sacrifice—in particular, on religious grounds—the profane substance of the human being passes from the mundane into the sacred—consecrated—realm. The Serbian fighter hence becomes a participant in the Kingdom of Heaven.

As sacrificial agents—human offerings—for the Serbian nation, heroes restore with their exemplary deeds the communion between the sacred and the profane. Within the Serbian cultural context, the actuality of heroes does not amount to abstract existences from a remote past. Instead, Serbian heroes like King Lazar, Tsar Dusan and St. Sava manifest the union of the body and spirit of Serbianhood. It is precisely the recollection and veneration of the physical substance of these individuals that is significant for *Homo Serbicus* as a permanent referent of a concrete past, defined through their lives and actions which are actualised in the present. Their enduring presence is concretised within the Orthodox, ecclesiastical memory, which inspires the Serbian nation in its profane struggle.

The Concept of Freedom

“It is better for us all to die in battle
for freedom and the holy faith”⁵⁵

The strong laudatory nature of the concept of freedom comprises a variety of applications which oscillate from notions of individual, political and civil liberties to the deliverance from physical restraint or confinement. The socio-political implication of these perceptions of freedom is invariably relevant for the actions, structures, policies and institutions which are considered valuable for *Homo Serbicus*. Under the specificities of the Serbian spatial and temporal context, the exegetic interpretations of the concept are provided by the empirical and descriptive definition, found in the national, epic poetry and the evaluative (spiritual) sense attributed in Orthodoxy.

In the Serbian epic songs⁵⁶ the notion of freedom (*sloboda*) referred solely to a shared desire, for self-rule and deliverance from the Ottomans. When correlated with the religious significations of sacrificial acts of heroism, exemplified by the battle of Kosovo, the concept of freedom was elevated into an ideological principle of political importance. Due to the patriarchal character of the Serbian society at the time, a personal interpretation of freedom failed to develop, as it was socially regarded unnecessary and superfluous. In the absence of established, legalistic (*étatist*) restraints, extensive—not absolute—degrees of individual freedom⁵⁷ were enjoyed, subject to collectively sanctioned norms. References to national perceptions of independence chronologically followed the evolution of Serb epic poetry. The concepts of nation and national liberation were formalised in the nineteenth century, under the influence of the modern and legally defined nation-state. However, a transcendental perception of freedom persisted in terms of the free will, with which each person participated in the Serbian Orthodox communion.

Freedom, as an individual and collective signifier for *Homo Serbicus*, pertains to a broader understanding, incorporating both positive and negative connotations.⁵⁸ In the case of the latter, freedom is perceived as the absence of external restraints in terms of foreign occupation which impede upon the territorial sovereignty and spiritual continuity of the Serb nation. From this primary notion of freedom, positive perceptions are constructed which involve the ability of *Homo Serbicus* to realise their personal and social potentials and to fulfil their profane and sacred dispositions within the parameters of a free, collective entity.

The Concepts of Justice and Vengeance

The historical perception of justice—encountered in Serbian epic poetry⁵⁹—is thematically delineated through references to the social virtue of conformity, with collective principles of conduct and moral righteousness. The diachronic importance of these notions for *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* are identified with their aspirations to preserve the internal and external cohesion of different forms and structures of societal organisation. For that purpose, the empirical wisdom and practices emanating from the social and historical circumstances of Serbianhood determine the procedural nature and methods of the concept's applications.

As it has already been suggested, in the absence of formal legal norms the organisational structure of the Serbian patriarchal society was the primary source of justice. Under these conditions the notion related to regulatory principles of economic and social interaction. The family unit was the foundation signifier of this process that was in turn grounded on references to custom. Social relationships were constructed upon the basis of customary principles and communal morality that aimed to distinguish between right and wrong conduct. In the case of the latter, extreme forms of tribal punishment existed in terms of blood vengeance, whose application was progressively phased out through the formation of medieval states.

The chronological connection between this distant experience of social-behavioural justice and its contemporary interpretations is provided by Serbian Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy forged perceptions—in spite of their factual accuracy—of injustice⁶⁰ and oppression, which were externally inflicted on the Serbian nation by the Ottomans. In the context of the Serbian society, Orthodoxy connoted and connotes righteousness, reverence, ethical sensibility—in the form of societal reparation—, welfare and assistance, on which *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* construct their personal and collective existence.⁶¹ An existence that profoundly emphasises the social disposition of Serbian personhood, as instilled within the family unit.

Unity in Diversity

The social importance of the family unit for *Homo Serbicus*

The formulation or application of the preceding evaluative precepts presupposes a concrete social environment, forged on the volitional placement of *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica*, within the broader societal struc-

tures. Subject to historical, confessional and cultural influences, notions of Serbian personhood are derived from and juxtaposed to the collective entity. Agapeistic moral references, honour, heroism, freedom and justice are internalised within the personal psychology, through their overwhelming communal significance. Social esteem is granted to or withdrawn from the Serbian individual on the basis of actions, which externalise his or her social content and position. For *Homo Serbicus*, these perceptions of sociability or placement are initially constructed and conditioned in the family unit, which in the Serbian cultural context is not a replicative social anachronism, but rather a religiously sanctioned institution.

Orthodoxy pertains to a highly principled notion of the family, based on the conviction of a common, human, social disposition. Of course, there are exceptions to this “idealised” assumption, justified as the expression of free will, with which each person is committed to the Orthodox faith and its corollary, social relationships. Yet for Orthodoxy, the institution of the family—in a genealogical homology of the living and the dead—constitutes the most basic form of social life. In consequence, the socialising function of the family unit is not evaluated in terms of a simple association of individuals, but rather as an encompassing bond, extending beyond its current, constitutive members.⁶² In spite of the variable impact of social and economic processes on the morphology of the Serbian family in its extensive, patriarchal or “nuclear” arrangement, it remains an essential and irreducible characteristic⁶³ of personal, local and national life.

On a personal level, the experiences of the family life establish the structures upon which the reproduction of sociable individual(s) is assured. Within the patterned construct of the family, the physical processes of personal maturation correspond with forms of social interaction, which determine the continuity of cultural customs and norms. For *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica*, notions of cultural continuity revolve around their initiation to the Orthodox faith and Tradition and the contained references of genealogical consciousness or blood lineage. Upon these perceptions, a sense of collective subjectivity is forged in an intertwined fashion that combines the internal cohesion of the family and the delineation of roles and responsibilities, which are assigned according to gender and age.⁶⁴ With regard to the latter it should be noted that culturally and religiously induced forms of respect are attributed to the older members of the Serbian family, in recognition of their societal influence and contribution.⁶⁵

Variable patriarchal references—on the other hand—determine the expectations that families and society place upon their individual members. The

scope and depth of these expectations are springing from the historical and cultural heritage of Serbia that reiterate the dichotomy between patrilineal and matrilineal kinship.⁶⁶ In the case of *Homo Serbicus*, perceptions of selfhood depend upon the ability to identify the self within the categories of identity, provided by the family structures and the entailed, genealogical references. Notions of selfhood define his identity in terms of a continuity in the male line, one in which all male ancestors—father and grandfathers alike—are fused. The family name is accordingly conferred on a patrilineal basis, while the essence of Serbian manhood is crystallised within the innate significance which the community bestows on its adult, male population.

This historically favourable position of *Homo Serbicus* pertains to the collective need for defence and protection against external or internal threats. The emergent, social centre of gravity supported a preponderance of men over women in an unconcealed dominance of the former over the latter. In consequence, the cult of the warrior⁶⁷ has strongly influenced the overall behaviour of the Serbian society, with traces of male dominance found clearly in its tradition.⁶⁸ The precepts of honour, heroism, the ability to cope with the unexpected and to improvise under circumstances of hardship in the battlefield were distinctive Serbian male properties. *Homo Serbicus* constituted the externalised projection of his family and community. This close correlation between the Serbian adult male and his family unit has persisted over time through the social prominence of the patrilineal, evaluative discourse.⁶⁹ Social applications of this principle were also evident in the organisation of state structures,⁷⁰ which shared primarily their collective responsibilities with the Serb male citizens. In this context, the policy of military⁷¹ conscription further reiterates the pervasive, family and social importance of *Homo Serbicus* as the designated defender of their respective causes.⁷² However, through the experiences of urbanisation and socialist modernisation, certain patriarchal imbalances were re-addressed by the transformation of the structure, size and formal constitution of the Serbian family.

Historical and cultural perceptions have conspired toward the asymmetrical, social placement of the Serb female, often concealing the dynamic nature of her family and collective contribution. In fact, a dichotomy persists between the external-social and internal-family role of Serbian women, attributing to them an essentially passive, almost subject-like character and predisposition. Literary references have frequently ascribed to notions of female passivity in terms of an absolute commitment to the

husband⁷³ or diminished to the role of the anonymous, sacrificial subject.⁷⁴ Orthodoxy's notional vision of women is also of an ambivalent character,⁷⁵ as it pertains to both a deified understanding of the female and human nature based upon the Mariological doctrine⁷⁶ and to a less "idealised" supposition of female dependence on man.⁷⁷ The role of women is abased to that of a participant in the reproduction of humankind, a perpetuated subjection emanating from their *physical creation* from Adam's rib.

These general perceptions of womanhood correlate to societal structures⁷⁸ which fail to represent the internal circumstances of a Serbian family in their entirety. For example, in the Serb household the assignment of specific roles and responsibilities has been partly obscured but not altered by the increased participation of women in the labour market.⁷⁹ A matrilineal line of thought still permeates the closed system of socialisation that originates in the Serbian family and is manifested in the female arbitration of ritual propriety, in the strong attachment of the children to their parents in and the ensuing forms of kinship. The Serbian family is morally preserved through the affection and abnegation of its female members who become the conceptual antipodes of *Homo Serbicus*.⁸⁰ It should be clarified that the social attributes of *Femina Serbica* do not contradict the position of her male counterpart, but rather constitute a complementary and reciprocal part of the family and the community.⁸¹ Their synergetic relationship is further consolidated by the close affinity between the Serbian mother and her son(s). Upon this enduring relationship, matrilineal lines are established within the patriarchal context of the Serbian society through the birth of male children who will be the bearers of the family genealogy and heritage.

While family and social validation, for Serbian women, are no longer conferred solely on the basis of parenthood, their societal placement remains intertwined with the long-term dynamics of their families. The social picture that emerges from the foregoing analysis pertains to a delineated arrangement of life trajectories for *Homo Serbicus*, which have persisted in spite of temporal or spatial developments. Corollary notions of selfhood emulate the cumulated references and experiences of family life in their previous or present manifestations. On the basis of these references, *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* are then able to pursue their respective aims, as these are individually and socially conceived.

The *Zadruga*

A social “structural” legacy from the Serbian past

The social significance of the Serbian family pertains to a process of dynamic conceptualisation, in which its developmental continuity is ensured through the “endless” and imperceptible interaction of the different generations. The actual form and composition of the family unit is hence not limited to its “animate human content” at any given time. In fact, it extends beyond the confines of actuality to symbolic and diachronic references as it distils the entire family genealogy in a coherent line of thought. The ramifications for the orientational, relational or cognitive experiences of the individual members of the family are manifested through their juxtaposition to their collective entity. For *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica*, the processes of socialisation primarily revolve around personal merit and abilities, which are also complemented by the fulfilment of their respective family roles. The perpetuation of this anti-individualistic and communal social ethos is induced by the historical specificities of the Serbian patriarchal culture, favouring organisational principles or forms of an extended, kinship-based nature, like the *zadruga*.

The elucidation of this communal form of societal organisation will begin with an interpretive dichotomy between the etymology of the term and its historical applications. The concept of *zadruga*⁸² is rather contemporary—first recorded during the nineteenth century. However, a similar chronological reference is not applicable to its historical origins, which are traced in the Balkan medieval times and attributed to circumstantial, social–political constraints and needs. Following on, from the Ottoman destruction of collective—“state”—structures, the *zadruga* assumed a defensive importance aimed at the preservation of a community, including the functional incorporation of economic interests and activities.⁸³ Under these conditions, legal references were established, delineating the patrilineal character of the *zadruga* and the entailed economic processes. This association involved “a father and son or brothers, who live in the same house and share the same health”, “but who have separate food... property [and] should work like the other peasants”.⁸⁴

In the intervening period, different historical forms of *zadruga* evolved⁸⁵ that placed variable importance to corporal and property principles of union, according to genealogical lineage and kinship. While the purely economic content⁸⁶ of the *zadruga* has impacted on its morphology and size, it would be reductive to consider this social structure as a fraternity,

solely bound by the corporal management of undivided family property. In the Serbian historical and cultural context, the significance of the *porodična* or *obiteljska* (familial) *zadruga*⁸⁷ originates in the diachronic recurrence of a patrilineal⁸⁸ core and pervasive emphasis of an agnatic ancestry. In other words, the *zadruga* was a social process, which in spite of spatial, temporal or socio-political constraints distilled the fundamental patriarchal and communal⁸⁹ essence of Serbianhood. These societal “constants” were then passed on to subsequent forms of the Serbian family unit—extensive or nuclear—and to corollary notions of personhood. Upon these socially bound precepts, a personal and collective genealogical cartography is constructed whose importance persists in the lives of *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica*.

Kumstvo

A social extension of Serbian “kinship”

Patrilineal lines also persist in the determination of certain societal relationships in Serbia, which extend beyond the scope of affinitive kinship. *Kumstvo* is probably the most prominent and enduring form of Serbian quasi-kinship⁹⁰ relation, propagated by cultural, religious and historical traditions. This honoured, social practice is inherited in the male line⁹¹ of the Serbian family and pertains to the privilege and responsibility involved in the designation of a godparent or a sponsor, the latter being one of the etymological–social descriptions of the term. Patterns of associations and exchange are subsequently constructed, ritually incorporating unrelated ancestral, genealogical lineage and households.

The duties of *kumstvo* are circumscribed by references to the Serbian Orthodox canon law,⁹² which are further complemented by prevalent local practices.⁹³ Detailed prescriptions and prohibitions on the succession of the ritual rites and the patterns of the emergent social relations are developed through regional folk. On ceremonial or customary grounds, the presence of the *kum* (godfather–sponsor) is required in the baptism, the marriage (as a witness) and the first cutting of the child’s hair, which is, however, neither sanctioned nor necessitated by canon law. Among these duties of *kumstvo*, the most significant are those of baptism, of chrismation and the selection of the name for the godchild.⁹⁴ The Orthodox pre-eminence of baptism bestows upon the *kum* a permanent responsibility for the spiritual guidance of the child, which may also include an act of sponsorship. This

responsibility is underlined by the fact that the initiation in the Serbian nation and ecclesiastical congregation is confirmed through baptism. Honour, prestige and social esteem are then conferred on the *kum* by the child's family, which are manifested in various forms under different circumstances. He is often an honoured participant in the celebration of the *slava*, a ritual position, that is symbolically reiterated by the sitting arrangement to the right of the priest,⁹⁵ the only person to precede him—"Bog na nebu, kum na zemlji"⁹⁶ (God in Heaven, the *kum* on earth).⁹⁷

While the secularising pressures of communism contributed to the decline of formalised rituals in Serbia, the practice of *kumstvo* retained a position of social and cultural prominence.⁹⁸ To that end, as a foundation signifier of Serbianhood is valued in relation to the historical, cultural or religious conditions, concretised and reflected in its own nature—ritually, spiritually or socially. More importantly, *kumstvo* establishes the first individually defined relationship that is both created in and extended beyond the Serbian family, upon which additional—intricate—personal and collective interactions will follow.

Homo Serbicus

Possessor of a "Balkan mentality"?⁹⁹

For *Homo Serbicus* the retention of a patriarchal lineage, Orthodox moral notions, the experience of a closely observed family environment, perceptions of personhood and their life trajectories have a contained and inherent intent that is explicitly ascribed to the construction of a coherent cosmology. The societal evolution and prominence of the foregoing ethno-cultural elements materialised in the Balkan spatial context, in which shared references of interaction and collective identification were gradually moulded into exclusive definitions of national selfhood.

When chronologically located in the internal Balkan space, the historical and territorial presence of *Homo Serbicus* is of a rather "contemporary" character. The developmental cycle of the Serbian people should be thus viewed as the outcome of interrelated processes that pertain to the influence of the geographically porous and culturally diverse Balkan region. Subject to this human-regional framework, the obviated question would be as to whether *Homo Serbicus* possesses aspects of a Balkan mentality.¹⁰⁰ Corollary to this primary question would be the related matter of "evidence", supporting the validity and actuality of spatially induced at-

tributes. To that end, mentality is bound to “contexts of communication, on styles of reasoning and eventually on their political background”.¹⁰¹

On geographical grounds, the Balkan peninsula is a concretely defined entity, whose topography includes mountain ranges, valleys and navigable rivers that create an intricate spatial context, neither externally impenetrable nor always passable, for its inhabitants.¹⁰² In consequence, the Balkans have experienced a relative fluidity, with regard to their human content, as a result of numerous invasions and migrations.¹⁰³ In fact, the Serbian peoples have endured both of these processes, before their scattered settlement within the south-eastern part of the Balkan region. The ensuing Christianisation of the Serbian settlers provides their initial referent of a collectively shared mentality, Orthodoxy.

Orthodoxy doctrinally embraces a universal-catholic notion of membership, originally unmediated by national ecclesiastical bodies. Hence, the spiritual and physical participation in the sacraments, the temporal signification of the Orthodox calendar, the importance of places of worship and congregation (the “geography of faith”) were all communally shared life experiences that were complemented by the inclusion of locally venerated saints and liturgical languages.¹⁰⁴ Indigenous linguistic references did not obstruct the articulation of this religiously invoked, personal and collective biographies, as their inception and societal application were forged within an ethnically unregulated and continuous space.¹⁰⁵

This undivided, Orthodox referent of human interaction was further enhanced by the Ottoman¹⁰⁶ rule, the second postulate of a shared Balkan mentality. The Ottoman conquest introduced binding administrative and social forms of organisation, which incorporated local and regional components to the broader community. Measures of taxation, economic transactions, familial and other relationships were substantiated and objectified in the parameters of the Ottoman Empire. Orthodox affinities were encouraged and tolerated, through the adoption of the millet system that organised the Balkan peoples according to ecclesiastical communities.¹⁰⁷ Within the scope of this synergetic interaction between Orthodoxy and the Ottoman rule, a corollary aspect of communal mentality emerged in the eighteenth century, in the notion of Europe.

Perceptions of Europe¹⁰⁸ pertained to an idealised abstraction of a civilised world whose importance for the Balkan population was primarily inspirational. Specific cognitive or orientational references were also encouraged in this European context, under circumstances that emphasised common, religious beliefs. The Serbian people were hence historically at

tached to their Orthodox Russian counterparts, a relationship that permeated both popular culture and literature.¹⁰⁹ Yet, these shared Balkan experiences came to an abrupt conclusion through the nationalisation of space, culture, traditions, history and religion in the nineteenth century.

For *Homo Serbicus*, the recollection of these Balkan commonalities neither obscures, nor undermines the specificities of the national project. In fact, these shared references theoretically complement the genealogical claim of a national community that has persisted over time. The problem arises when these perceptions of “context-confined” mentality are solely prescribed as the historical property of a nation. Under the conditions of the modern nation-state, different views may develop, with regard to the membership and constitution of a national collectivity. The close and contested relationship between Montenegrins¹¹⁰ and Serbs is a derivative of the foregoing Balkan referents, crystallised on the basis of religion, geography and culture, including the shared memory of a medieval Empire.

Homo Serbicus and *Femina Serbica*, as human beings of historical and territorial substance, possess traits of a Balkan mentality based on Orthodoxy, the Ottoman legacy and notions of a European structure. These perceptions interact, complement and contribute toward the constitution of Serbian selfhood, as it is personally and collectively experienced within the family unit and its corollary social network. The Serbian evaluative (moral-ethical) principles are granted spatial-temporal importance—internalised, within *Homo Serbicus*. A genealogical lineage is thus constructed that incorporates the distant and broadly conceived Balkan heritage into the specific, nationally delineated, Serbian cosmology.

Homo Serbicus

“Creatures” of substance or mere stereotypes?

The characterisable and emergent core from the preceding analysis attributes pervasive or recurrent precepts of personhood to *Homo Serbicus*, upon which the experience of collective belonging is substantiated. These evaluative perceptions and social interactions are found to a variable degree and scope in each individual member of the Serbian society. In other words, gradations exist with regard to the personal disposition to heroism, interpretations of honour, confessional adherence and social proclivities. These gradations also permeate the Serb language, whereby the term *Srbijanac* connotes to the inhabitant of Serbia proper, and the verb *srbovati*, meaning

to live and behave like a Serb.¹¹¹ Yet, in their different and variable forms, these characteristics do not amount to a metoposcopist¹¹² appraisal of *Homo Serbicus*, but rather constitute an aggregate ground, which supports the processes of *morphogenesis*, *morphostasis* and *morphopoiisi* in the Serbian enclave.

Of course, the general character of these principles and social interactions obscures the individual developmental cycle and may be susceptible to stereotypical appraisals of *Homo Serbicus*. The stereotypical concept “is based not on carefully collected data but on hearsay, on anecdotes, on partial and incomplete experience... that does not mean that... is always and necessarily false, but it does mean that it is taken on faith rather than founded on demonstrated fact”.¹¹³ As possessors of a—previously defined—Balkan mentality, the Serbian peoples are the assumed agents of the negative connotations conferred upon the residence of this geographic region.¹¹⁴ These connotations and, in particular, their violent and aggressive content, were prominent in the wars that destroyed Yugoslavia—attributed to “the cult of warriors and military leaders” or the awareness of “lower levels of civilisation”.¹¹⁵ At the same time, in the perceived scope of their national destiny, *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* adhere invariably to views of victimisation, of externally orchestrated conspiracies and genocidal policies.¹¹⁶

The merit and truth of these attributes pertain, partly, to the circumstances that canvass their inception and articulation.¹¹⁷ Their inevitability, though, on the grounds that they “have the function of rendering our world more tractable, more manageable”¹¹⁸ could be solely defended in conjunction with notions of the collective—as the referent of cognition and observation encompassing the individual agent. In other words, the use of stereotypes is induced by the characterisation of the individual, in relation to localities, societies or states. Yet, such stereotypical generalisations, while theoretically enhancing the internal visibility of communities, also abase their human content to prescribed psychological and behavioural notions. Are we then to assume that all Serbian men aspire to a “warrior cult” and are willing participants in military campaigns?¹¹⁹ Similarly, are Serbian women pacifists and immune to nationalist proclivities?¹²⁰

To that end, concrete perceptions are also found within the Serb society when juxtaposed to external groups, but also on issues, pertaining to the collective expectations, placed on each individual. These notions are stereotypical when their application focuses upon the outward visibility of personhood and a society. Correspondingly, honour, heroism, the family or

Orthodoxy are hypostases of Serbian selfhood that evolve in the dialectical scope of individual existence and societal placement. These evaluative principles are not illusory correlations and stereotypes of Serbianhood. They are the internal referents of *Homo Serbicus*, whose cumulated substance is abased to stereotypical generalisations under conditions of actual or perceived crisis that fuse the personal existence into the national project.

Conclusion

In tune with the preceding analysis, the essence of *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* is deciphered into the hypostases of an Orthodox-induced moral cosmology and territorial-historical perceptions originating in the medieval past. Upon these references evaluative principles are constructed, which are internalised in *Homo Serbicus* within the scope of their collective entity.

These notions include an agapeistic content, honour, heroism and circumstantially invoked altruism, sacrifice and freedom—in the experience of independence. The impact of these diachronic ideals is concretised in the Serbian family, a close patriarchal institution, which socially conditioned and conditions the Serbian being, in the broader Balkan context.

The emergent characterisation is one of a coherent, historical and cultural lineage that reproduces notions of Serbian personhood and of national membership. The externalised manifestation of these perceptions—in the pursuance of profane, political salvation—is the core subject of the next chapter.

Notes

- 1 See Durkheim, Emile, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895) in Lukes, S. (ed.), translated by W. D. Halls (London: Macmillan, 1982).
- 2 See Smith, Wilfred Cantwell, *Faith and Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 14–15.
- 3 See Berling, Judith A., “Orthopraxy” and McDonough, Shelia, “Orthopraxy and Heterodoxy” in Eliade, Mircea (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), Vol. 11, pp. 129–32 and pp. 124–29, respectively. Bell, Catherine in *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 191–97, provides an interesting discussion on the foregoing dichotomy.
- 4 This example of orthopraxis—as a ritual form of commitment—is inspired from a

similar account of Bog Irishism by Mary Douglas in which the rule of Friday abstinence constitutes the core of the respective religious belief. Under these circumstances the author refers to opposing views, which distinguish between personal commitment to God and ritual conformity. See Douglas, Mary, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 3–4. The same subject is also discussed by Bell, Catherine in *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (pp. 196–97) with a particular emphasis on the symbolic importance of fish in the same social and religious context.

- 5 On purely informative grounds, the main periods of fasting in the Orthodox calendar are prior to the celebration of Easter—the Great Lent that lasts for the preceding seven weeks—, the Christmas Fast—for forty days—, the Fast of the Apostles and the Dormition Fast during the first two weeks of August. See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 300.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 223.
- 7 See Hick, J., *Evil and the God of Love*, second edition (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978).
- 8 The theological debate on the metaphysical notion of heaven and hell is coherently presented by Kvanvig, Jonathan L. in his article, “Heaven and Hell” in Quinn, Philip L. and Taliaferro, Charles (eds.), *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 562–68.
- 9 Gavrilovic, Zarko, *Pogled u vecnost: Reflekcije prolaznosti* (Kraljevo: Slovo), pp. 123–33.
- 10 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 261–63.
- 11 Matthew 7:12.
- 12 This excerpt is quoted by Oman, John, *Grace and Personality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), p. 62.
- 13 Ethical and moral hypostases are part of Orthodoxy’s doctrine, however, they only constitute an aspect of her substance. This is contrary to Immanuel Kant’s appreciation of religion in terms of its contained moral doctrine, whereby its remaining content was perceived as a “mere delusion”. See Körner, S., *Kant* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 170.
- 14 The significance of religion in the construction of social order or protection against anomie and chaos is further elaborated by Berger, Peter L., *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990), pp. 29–51.
- 15 Quoted by Eliade, Mircea, in *Symbolism, the Sacred, and the Arts*, edited by Apostolos-Cappadona, Dian (p. 6).
- 16 See Yannaras, Christos, *Ορθοδοξία και Δύση στη Νεώτερη Ελλάδα* (Athens: Δομος, 1992), pp. 156–57.
- 17 See Mappa, Sofia, *Ορθοδοξία και Εξουσία στην Ελληνική Κοινωνία* (Athens: Εξάντας, 1997), p. 62.
- 18 I specifically allude to the Christian contribution in the perception of social-political forms of organisation that emanate from “good acts”, in terms of both the knowledge and desire to be righteous. Societal participation hence becomes volitional and is expressed in the freedom to conform through personal choice to different structures of authority.

- 19 The agapeistic moral content is a very important part of Christian ethics and in particular, when viewed in conjunction with other social convictions and precepts. However, it should not be equated with love-monism, which reduces Orthodoxy to only an agapeistic substance. In fact, its societal signification is underlined through its reciprocal influences in relation to, for instance, faith, hope and righteousness or justice.
- 20 In this context the applied historical perception originates in Mircea, Eliade's interpretation of the subject that views history as "the source of hierophany, the actual revelation of the real." Quoted by Rennie, Bryan S., *Reconstructing Eliade: Making Sense of Religion*, p. 103.
- 21 The concept of *Homo feminaque Serbica* is used in purely euphemistic terms. Its recurrent presence in my analysis would be perceived as neither an indication of absurd genetic determinism—for instance, Serbs as a "unique" species of the hominid genus—nor as an expression of gender bias. In the case of the latter presumption, the ensuing references to the patriarchal structure of the Serbian society had no bearing whatsoever in the inception of that terminology.
- 22 In fact, the Serbian tribes occupied the area at the convergence of the rivers Danube, Drava and Sava.
- 23 This historical exegesis is supported by Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans Since 1453*, pp. 20–24; Judah, Tim, *The Serbs*, pp. 5–9; Fine, John V. A., *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century* (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1983); and Davies, Norman, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 235.
- 24 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδόξων Εκκλησιών Βουλγαρίας και Σερβίας*, p. 175. In his treatise of the subject, Gonis refers to Porphyrogenitus' historical work, *Προς τον ιδιον υιον Ρωμανον*.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 An interesting theory regarding the origins of the Serbian and Croat South Slavs is developed by Fine, John V. A., *The Early Medieval Balkans* (p. 57), in which an Iranian descent is attributed to them. However, he considers this particular assumption to be of no great significance, as their initial numerical presence was limited and they were successfully assimilated within the Slavic population and culture.
- 27 See Corovic, Vladimir, *Istorija srba*, second edition (Belgrade: Belgradski Izdavačko-Grafiski Zavod, 1993), pp. 3–76; and Stanojevic, St., *Istorija srpskoga naroda*, Drugo Izdanje (Belgrade: Nova Stamparija-Davidovic, 1910), pp. 1–34.
- 28 During this period a sense of kinship—between the Serbian tribes—developed on the adoption of Byzantine Christianity. With regard to their governmental structures, the Serbian people were organised in *Zupas*, which enabled them to maintain simultaneously a measure of independence and subordination toward the Byzantine Emperor. The fragmented character of this political system was underlined by the geographical substance of the Serb settlement. See Durham, Thomas, *Serbia: The Rise and Fall of a Medieval Empire* (York: William Sessions Ltd., 1989), pp. 1–7; Stanojevic, St., *Istorija srpskoga naroda*, pp. 35–60; and Corovic, Vladimir, *Istorija srba*, pp. 85–129.

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- 29 The unification of the Serbian people was the cumulative outcome of certain developments, involving the impact of the Crusades on Byzantium and Stefan Nemanjić's diplomatic skills, in forging strategic alliances with Western and Eastern neighbours. See Durham, Thomas, *Serbia: the Rise and Fall of a Medieval Empire*, pp. 3–16.
- 30 See Davies, Norman, *Europe: A History*, p. 389.
- 31 The historical specificities and significations of the battle of Kosovo shall be discussed in the fifth chapter. At this stage of my analysis, the aforementioned reference to the Serbian military defeat is indicative of the nation's popular recollections of this historical event. The importance of the battle of Kosovo, as the concluding chapter of a glorious past, is measured in terms of a diachronic and evaluative precept, engraved in the life of *Homo Serbicus*.
- 32 See Brkić, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry* (The Hague: Mouton & Co. Publishers, 1961), pp. 9–23.
- 33 Systems of honour also involve forms of exchange recognised as such within the collectivity. These exchanges might involve gifts or mutual obligations and duties; and generally they have a zero-sum character. This gives the system a "static" quality, but it also provides stability under circumstances of economic marginality.
- 34 See Judah, Tim, *The Serbs*, pp. 124–30.
- 35 The preceding account of Serbian history does not seek, due to its synoptic nature, to preferentially present certain events while ignoring others. The synoptic appraisal is of course necessitated by the confined parameters of the overall analysis. Instead, the exegesis for this approach should be sought in the effort to locate thematically the enduring elements of Serbianhood as these are constructed by the historical and territorial content of the national identity. This line of argumentation also reaffirms the initial definition of the Serbian nation as an "imagined" community.
- 36 Further to the Orthodox faith and Serbian epic poetry—as the foundations of collective, evaluative principles—I had the opportunity to discuss (research) this subject with a number of Serbian individuals. When asked to describe the nation's values, their responses included the notions of freedom, Orthodoxy, bravery, a strong sense of independence, pride and even in a single instance, the negative connotation of malice (*inat*). It should be noted that the selection of the discussants involved a sample of various ages, professional occupations and educational backgrounds.
- 37 To that end, I do not aspire to attribute an absolute uniformity of evaluative characteristics to the Serbian peoples. However, as a community they need to reflect their individual and collective ethos in order to maintain a minimal measure of cohesion. This social fact provides the justificatory grounds for the proceeding discussion of certain recurrent values.
- 38 Matthew (22:37–40)
- 39 See Gavrilović, Zarko, *Pogled u vecnost*, pp. 11–44.
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 See Vacek, E. C., Vacek, S. J. E. C., *Love, Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1994). The

nature of a human bond or friendship in terms of the relation it creates is emphasised by Vacek's view that "we are with others and not simply for them or receiving from them" (p. 280).

- 42 Idziak, Janine Marie cites this Platonic idea in her article, "Divine Command Ethics" in Quinn, Philip L., and Taliaferro, Charles (eds.), *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, p. 453.
- 43 In view of the extensive violence and ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, the aforementioned reference to the moral principle "to love your neighbour as yourself" could be viewed as ethically inappropriate, obsolete or even void of any substance. To that end, I should emphasise that the present analysis establishes the evaluative principles on which *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* construct their individual and/or collective lives and relationships—whether patriarchal in nature, extended or closed in form. Nonetheless, on the basis of empirical evidence, the question is obviated as to whether there are limits beyond which a fellow man (neighbour) is not warranted the "value" to his or her well being. The synoptic answer would be that the presence of the "love ethic" in the Serbian society, as in almost every other social collectivity, is a minimal prerequisite of cohesion. Ethnic or non-ethnic violence, on the other hand, may originate in individual, communal, instinctive, accidental, religious or circumstantial perceptions, which in their variable expressions constitute undesirable and condemnable actions. Most importantly, though, such actions characterise a society, but do not constitute it. If we were to replace the principle of love ethic as a moral referent of societal cohesion with violence, then we would be abasing society to bandits writ large.
- 44 This excerpt from an epic folk song is quoted by Brkic, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry*, p. 106.
- 45 See *Collins Dictionary of the English Language* (London: Collins, 1984) p. 704.
- 46 See Brkic, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry*, pp. 99–110.
- 47 Heywood, Andrew cites this idea of C. B. Macpherson in *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, second edition (Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998), pp. 28–29.
- 48 See Brkic, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry*, p. 108.
- 49 With regard to the subject of treason, punitive measures involved different forms of sanction that were reciprocal to the breach of the *vera*. Jovan Brkic refers to certain instances of extreme punishment pursued by the Dinaric tribes, in terms of the destruction of property and blood vengeance, for the more serious forms of transgression. *Ibid*, p. 137.
- 50 The cumulative signification of *vera* relates to legal and moral (religious) practices that characterised the inception and constitution of the patriarchal society in Serbia. These norms of conduct comprised the Serb medieval law and the Orthodox canon—concretised in the autocephaly of the Church. As a result, they conditioned the internal and external perceptions of the Serbian being and his society as diachronic referents of pledges, treaties and cohesion, particularly during the period of Ottoman rule. *Ibid*, pp. 110–37.

- 51 *Ibid.*, pp. 34–82.
- 52 See Peristiany, J. G. (ed.), *Honour and Shame: The Values of the Mediterranean Society* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), *passim*; Campbell, John K., *Honour, Family and Patronage: A Study of Institutions and Moral Values in a Greek Mountain Community* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), *passim*; and Herzfeld, Michael, *The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan Mountain Village* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 3–50.
- 53 With regard to the blood content of honour, there are physical connotations that could be made on this subject, certain of which have acquired a cultural significance of their own. I specifically refer to the religious perception that views the heart as the union of body and soul (Ware, Timothy, pp. 64–65) and hence it becomes a reference of spiritually induced honour.
- 54 See Brkic, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry*, pp. 154–63.
- 55 *Ibid.*, p. 166.
- 56 *Ibid.*, pp. 165–69.
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 This interpretation of Serbian freedom in both “positive” (freedom to) and “negative” (freedom from) terms is of course influenced by Isaiah Berlin’s treatise, “Two Concepts of Liberty” in *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).
- 59 See Brkic, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry*, pp. 138–53.
- 60 In this context the concept of forgiveness involves repentance or confession—the sacramental act—in which the *sinner* is reconciled to the Church while the soul is healed, as absolution is also invested with spiritual advice. Orthodoxy incorporates a service of forgiveness in her liturgical cycles—on the Sunday before the Lent—when the clergy and the laity kneel one by one before each other and ask to be pardoned.
- 61 When compared to the moral precepts of a pre-modern and rural community, for example, Catholic southern Italy, a number of perceptions (honour, family, heroism and gender) are seemingly common in their ethical substance or the manner of their pursuance and implementation. Their Serbian distinctiveness originates in the non-universal character of Orthodoxy, invested with specific connotations—venerated patriots, liturgical cycles, sin and forgiveness—which are the *properties* of a closed cosmology. On the Italian equivalent, see Cipriani, Roberto, “La religiosité populaire en Italie...” in *Social Compass*, Vol. XXIII, Nos. 2–3, 1976, pp. 221–31.
- 62 See French, R. M., *Serbian Church Life*, pp. 40–44; and Vukovic, Milan T., *Narodni obicaji verovanja i poslovice kod srba*, pp. 222–29.
- 63 The analysis of the social significance of the Serbian family is formulated on the specific, cultural conditions of the country and also generally accepted views of social science that assert its institutional importance in every human society. These views are developed in the context of Europe and North America and refer to the “nuclear” family unit in Parsons, Talcott and Bales, Robert F., *Family, Socialisation and Interaction Process* (Glencoe: Free Press,

- 1955). This subject is further elaborated by Fortes, Meyer, in "Introduction" in Goody, Jack R. (ed.), *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*, Cambridge papers in Social Anthropology, No. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 1–14, through the examination of the social importance of the family unit in relation to the domestic group.
- 64 The specificities of roles, assigned to the different generations of the society are rather concretely defined within the context of social relationships. This social observation is further elaborated by Simic, Andrei in "Machismo and Cryptomatriarchy: Power, Affect, and Authority in the Traditional Yugoslav Family" in Ramet, Sabrina P. (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans: Women and Society in Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav Successor States* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 11–4.
- 65 The social influence and contribution of the older members of the Serbian society is manifested as a reciprocated relationship of different generations, perpetuated even after the marriage of the younger members of the family. *Ibid*, pp. 16–17.
- 66 See Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1972), pp. 16–44.
- 67 See Judah, Tim, *The Serbs*, pp. 29–47.
- 68 See Brkic, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry*, *passim*.
- 69 See Simic, Andrei, "Machismo and Cryptomatriarchy", pp. 13–14.
- 70 The exclusion of the Serbian women from the political process was finally terminated by the communist regime in the aftermath of World War II. See Branka Maga's "Afterword" in Ramet, Sabrina P. (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans*, pp. 277–78.
- 71 Serbian women have also fought for their country during World War II in the partisan forces. There are various interpretations on the volitional nature of their participation, oscillating from the highly idealised–altruistic, partisan view to their forced enrolment in the war machinery. See Jancar-Webster, Barbara, "Women in the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement" in Ramet, Sabrina P. (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans*, pp. 72–74.
- 72 Rebecca West wrote in her rather biased (pro-Serbian) but perceptive and sensitive account of the inter-war Yugoslavia that "a man is not a man if will not save his seed". See West, Rebecca, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey through Yugoslavia* (Edinburgh: Canongate Classics, 1993), p. 1008. The author was convinced that the ailing Western European civilisation needed—urgently—the spiritual capital of the Slavs. Rebecca West's work "stands as the twentieth century's most overwhelming attempt to come to terms, with what it meant to contemplate Eastern Europe, as an intellectual from Western Europe". This view of her contribution is quoted by Wolff, Larry, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilisation on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 368. On West's description of Yugoslavia, see also Goldsworthy, Vesna, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), *passim*.

- 73 This particular representation of the Serbian woman/wife is emphasised by Milos Tsernianski in his novel *Migrations*, Vol. I (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994). In the introductory part of his story, during the departure of the Serbian troops to the north, the women are described as “frenzied” or irrational (“her embraces, her insane attacks”, p. 4), generally overwhelmed by the events (“the women... wailed, and waved their white kerchiefs, sashes, foot cloths!” p. 5). The broader ramifications for the country’s political culture, from the archetypal placement of women, are elaborated upon by Colovic Ivan, “I majka i ljubavnica” in *Nin*, 11th November 1994, pp. 28–29.
- 74 This is the assigned “role” to the sole female character in the epic poem *The Mountain Wreath (Gorski vijenac)* by Prince-Bishop Petar II Petrovic-Njegos. After delivering a lament, in which the death of her killed brother is sung, the girl dies—commits suicide. See Njegos, P. P., *Gorski vijenac* (Belgrade: Srpska Knjizevna Zadruga, 1973).
- 75 An interesting and synoptic discussion of the religious approach to women is provided by Coakley, Sarah, “Feminism” in Quinn, Philip L. and Taliaferro, Charles (eds.), *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 601–606.
- 76 The Mariological doctrine exemplifies the female nature of motherhood, as represented by *Theotokos* in the altruistic act of providing the physical (flesh) and spiritual (soul) hypostases of the child. See Yannaras, Christos, *Elements of Faith*, pp. 99–101.
- 77 See Pamboukis, Yorgos, *Στην Τροχία του ενος Θεου: Αποπειρά προσεγγίσης των πραγματικών γεγονότων στις μονοθεϊστικές θρησκείες* (Athens: Ελληνικό Λογοτεχνικό και Ιστορικό Αρχείο, 1999), pp. 499–505.
- 78 Zarana Papić provides an interesting point of view on the nature of social structures in Serbia. Her interpretation on the subject of the public sphere draws upon very strong gender connotations. Thus, “the public sphere is... the order of the despotic masculine power with the mysterious, silent and invisible Great Master-Leader as the... Great Saviour-Father-Provider-Controller of the totally subjugated *female Nation*”. Quoted by Papić, Zarana, “Women in Serbia: Post-Communism, War, and Nationalist Mutations” in Ramet, Sabrina P. (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans*, p. 165.
- 79 Yugoslav communism is credited with the increased participation of Serbian women in the labour market (beyond purely agricultural activities) and their ensuing opportunities in higher education. Yet, societal differences between the two sexes were also present—under the communist system—in the form of greater opportunities for men. See Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, pp. 355–59.
- 80 See Simić, Andrej, “Machismo and Cryptomatriarchy”, pp. 21–28.
- 81 Similar cultural conditions that support an intertwined relationship between the different male and female social roles are found across the Mediterranean region. See Pitt-Rivers, Julian “Honour and Social Status” in Peristiany, J. G. (ed.), *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, pp. 45–53 and 62–71.
- 82 See Davies, Norman, *A History of Europe*, p. 390.
- 83 See Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*, pp. 16–22; and Corović, Vladimir, *Istorija srba*, pp. 395–455.

- 84 This legal definition of the *zadruga* is attributed to article 70 of the law code of Tsar Dusan and is cited in Davies, Norman, *A History of Europe*, p. 390.
- 85 A formalised *zadruga* was created in the Military Frontier, correlating land-ownership to the performance of military service. In its context, references of kinship remained important in the determination of membership, without, however, precluding the regulated inclusion of others. Under these conditions, this form of *zadruga* was highly reminiscent of an institution, rather than an extended household. See Hammel, E. A., "The Zadruga as Process" in Laslett, Peter and Wall, Richard (eds.), *Household and Family in Past Times, Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America, with Further Materials from Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 337–39.
- 86 One of the purely economic reasons for the creation of a *zadruga* was the shared responsibility in the payment of taxes (for instance, hearth tax) or dues among its members. *Ibid*, p. 335.
- 87 *Ibid*, p. 338.
- 88 See Erlich, Vera Stein, "The Southern Slav Patriarchal Family", in *Sociological Review*, 32, pp. 224–41.
- 89 The communal nature of the *zadruga* was viewed by Svetozar Markovic, one of the founders of Serbian socialism, as a cultural and political precursor of social collectivism. See Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*, p. 18; Skerlic, Jovan, *Svetozar Markovic: njegov zivot, rad i ideje* (Belgrade: Izdavacka Knjizavnica Napredak, 1922); and McClellan, Woodford D., *Svetozar Markovic and the Origins of Balkan Socialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).
- 90 The term "quasi-kinship" describes the process of institutional extension of social ties among unrelated groups and is cited in Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, p. 360.
- 91 See Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*, p. 122.
- 92 The Serbian Orthodox canon law emphasises the need for a sponsor for the sacramental act of baptism. This person should also be a baptised member of the ecclesiastical congregation.
- 93 See Hammel, Eugene A., *Alternative Social Structures and Ritual Relations in the Balkans*, Anthropology of modern societies series (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Inc., 1968), pp. 1–10.
- 94 See Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*, p. 122.
- 95 See Hammel, Eugene A., *Alternative Social Structures and Ritual Relations in the Balkans*, p. 80.
- 96 *Ibid*, p. 81.
- 97 These social practices—*kumstvo*—arise logically out of Orthodoxy, considering the doctrinal importance attached to the sacraments of baptism, marriage and chrismation. See Vukovic, Milan T., *Narodni obicaji verovanja i poslovice kod srba*, pp. 33–50 and 99–125.

- 98 See Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, p. 362.
- 99 This analysis of *Homo Serbicus* in the context of a Balkan mentality follows closely the thematical parameters established on the same subject by Kitromilides, Pashalis M., "Balkan Mentality: History, Legend, Imagination" in *Nations and Nationalism*, 2 (2), 1996, pp. 163–91.
- 100 Jovan Cvijic introduced *la mentalité Balkanique* as a concept in his treatise *La Péninsule Balkanique: Géographie humaine* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1918), p. 111. The attributed characteristics to the term were of a psychological and intellectual nature (p. 263–64) originating in the interaction of historical, ethnic and societal factors, with the specificities of the spatial, geographical context (p. 263).
- 101 Quoted by Lloyd, G. E. R., *Demystifying Mentalities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 142.
- 102 See Mazower, Mark, *The Balkans* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000), pp. 17–44.
- 103 Jovan Cvijic thought of migrations as being particularly significant in the determination of the "mentality" (*les caractères psychiques*) of a population (p. 263).
- 104 See Kitromilides, P. M., "'Balkan Mentality': History, Legend, Imagination", p. 177.
- 105 The interplay of linguistic variety in the daily lives of the Balkan people is further discussed by Anastasia N. Karakasidou in *Field of Wheat, Hills of Blood*, pp. 54–76.
- 106 See Kitromilides, P. M., "'Balkan Mentality': History, Legend, Imagination", pp. 184–85.
- 107 See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans Since 1453*, pp. 81–95.
- 108 See Kitromilides, P. M., "'Balkan Mentality': History, Legend, Imagination", pp. 185–86.
- 109 See Tsernianski, Milos, "Migrations", Vol. I, *passim*.
- 110 The contested ethnic nature of the Serbian–Montenegrin relationship stems from their different historical experiences during the Ottoman occupation. In this context, Montenegro maintained a semi-independent status under the guidance of prince–bishops, concluded with the alignment to the Serb national causes in World War I. In consequence, the clan-based Montenegrin society was divided between supporters of national independence and advocates of the Serb–Montenegrin union. Their claims have since persisted and were passed on to subsequent generations.
- 111 These Serbian terms are elucidated by Benson, Morton, *Serbo-Croatian–English Dictionary*, third edition (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1990), p. 588.
- 112 The adjective *metoposcopist* pertains to the "art" of "reading" a person's character or luck (metoscopy), on the basis of the anatomic features found on the forehead.
- 113 This definition of stereotypes is quoted by Klineberg, Otto, *The Human Dimension in International Relations* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 34.

- 114 On the subject of negative human attributes (irregularity, disorder, violent passions) of the Balkan region, see Kitromilides, P. M., “‘Balkan Mentality’: History, Legend, Imagination”, p. 163; and also Todorova, Maria, *Imagining the Balkans*, *passim*.
- 115 The aforementioned views of the Serbian people belong to E. Klein, author of the article “Yugoslavia as a Group”, in *Croatian Medical Journal* Vol. 33, No. 3, 1992, pp. 3–13. These excerpts are cited by Kecmanovic, Dusan, “Psychiatrists in Times of Ethnonationalism” in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 1999, p. 310.
- 116 See Ivekovic, Ivan, “Ethnic Conflict and Ethnocracy in the Balkans and Caucasus: A Comparison”, unpublished paper presented at the 6th ICCEES (International Council for Central and East European Studies), 20 July–3 August 2000, Tampere, Finland, pp. 12–18.
- 117 See Duijker, H. C. J. and Frijda, N. H., *National Character and National Stereotypes: A Trend Report Prepared for the International Union of Scientific Psychology* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1960), p. 117.
- 118 *Ibid*, p. 125.
- 119 On the basis of personal observation and experience (during 1990–92), in the former Yugoslavia a considerable number of Serbian conscripts refused to fulfil their military duties and either went into hiding or fled their country. Their actions do not deprive these individuals of the “possession” of evaluative notions of honour, Orthodoxy, the respect for the family unit, or even heroism. Instead, through the negation of military duties, these individuals manifest the personal and variable experience of these notions as substances of personhood and not mere stereotypes.
- 120 The answer to this question would of course be a negative one. This matter is briefly alluded to by Bracewell, Wendy in her article “Rape in Kosovo: Masculinity and Serbian Nationalism” in *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 6, Part 4, October 2000, p. 567.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PURSUIT OF “SECULAR” SALVATION THE INFLUENCE OF ORTHODOXY IN THE SERBIAN POLITICAL CULTURE

Synopsis: *The chapter focuses upon Orthodoxy's impact on Serbian political culture.¹ The juxtaposition of Orthodoxy with concrete political manifestations, past or present, pertains to the social dynamics of the former as an encompassing reference of the Serbian collectivity. Orthodox perceptions of personhood and the community emphasise the continuous interaction of the physical–metaphysical human hypostases. Upon this interaction, coherent notions of individual and of collective conduct are forged, reflected in the function of social institutions. Under the conditions of a differentiated Serbian society, the Orthodox Church has historically shared the profane “custody” of her deity with political leaders and their respective ideologies. While their symbiosis has not always been harmonious, the societal prominence of religion has been invariably acknowledged in Serbian political life.*

To that end, Orthodoxy's influence is initially reviewed with regard to the legitimization of the political domain, including the externalisation of religiously induced, moral–ethical precepts. The reciprocated relation of Orthodoxy with the Serb polity is further elucidated through specific references to political ideologies, institutions and their representatives. Communism, the Serbian Monarchy, the Chetniks, Tito and Milosevic delineate accordingly the investigative core of this analysis. The ensuing conclusions and findings are then assessed in the context of the Serbian political culture, including the creation or absence of viable alternatives and the prospects of democracy.

“Vox Populi or Vox Dei”?

The dialectical relation of Orthodoxy and politics

Orthodoxy, as a holistic, religious experience, may initially appear to be an incompatible referent when considered with purely political forms of personal and societal expression. From a Serbian historical perspective, this almost unequal relation originates in the territorial organisation of the church, which transcends political boundaries in an encompassing pursuit of her congregation's existential problems, sacred or profane. The political encroachment of the Orthodox laity, the separation of *vox Dei* from *vox populi*, was forcibly pronounced under the secular conditions of Yugoslav communism, which limited the scope, intensity and formal depth of confessional affinities. In an Orthodox environment, communism's appeal proved “short-lived”, confined within the institutional-ideological realm or governmental control of a locality, a region and the state “so that the earthly world is not transformed into hell”.² The political authority of the state—as a primary social institution—was tautological with the establishment of the necessary preconditions, safeguarding the social development and consistent function of the collective-socialist-entity.

Orthodox Christianity ascribes to a specific and ideal notion of political, étatist authority, as an expression of divinely sanctioned providence aimed at the society's welfare. The ecclesiastic presence in inaugural political ceremonies or the incorporation of a religious oath of allegiance further confirms the Orthodox perception of the political life. Political leaders are bestowed with the responsibility to pursue the matters of their polity in the organisation and utilisation of human and inanimate resources. By its nature, this responsibility is chronologically specific to the earthly life. The awareness of the inherited limitations of political authority should ideally correlate to an accountable leadership, which adheres to the prescribed norms and nature of duty. The delineated precepts of the secular authority are clarified through the paraphrased application of a proposition, attributing to the Church the role of the State, whereby “the state or rather the civil authority [is] merely the police department of the Church”.³

Within this context, the individual members of the society are volitional participants in the political processes, which allow them to observe and control the legal constitution of their community. Yet, as the human experience evolves on a profane and a transcendental level, individual, Orthodox affinities are not necessarily correlating with the successful exercise of

political authority, in as much as the latter does not solely depend upon the societal prominence of the Orthodox faith. Upon this assumption, Orthodoxy doctrinally rejects the establishment of religiously defined political parties,⁴ which are perceived as divisive social agents—contrary to the universal appeal and project of the Church. Instead, the social purpose of Orthodoxy pertains to the unification and spiritual approximation of humanity, irrespective of political divisions and affiliations. For Orthodoxy, the ultimate referent is identified with the salvation of the human being that lies beyond the profane commitments of the earthly experience.

However, historical and contemporary circumstances provide the antipode to the preceding Orthodox ideal of political authority. Social cohesion revolves around a sense of dual allegiance, including the identification with the political spectrum and membership of the ecclesiastical body. In other words, Orthodoxy's relationship with the political authority is forged on humanity's mundane and physical existence, which incorporates religious principles in the legitimation of collective, social and political structures. In the Serbian context, Orthodoxy constitutes a salient political agent through the affiliation of spiritual and emotive precepts of personhood with the communal and national experience. In these conditions, the physical protection and defence of the nation could not be sustained on purely religious grounds. Political authority and more precisely, the étatist structures are justified as the sole sources of violent coercion, upon which law and order are established. In this equation, Orthodoxy possesses the ability and power to influence human perceptions, actions, purpose and attitudes. This religious potential for societal mobilisation lies in the core of the dialectical relation of Orthodoxy and politics.

Historical experience generally suggests that divine references in political authority transformed the latter into an immutable fact of life and political leaders were conferred with absolute power. The political realm was immune to popular debate and challenges, while authority was experienced as subjection and compulsion.⁵ Even if such absolutist aspirations are not entirely absent in contemporary polities, religiously invoked legitimacy enables the political ruler to transcend economic or transactional concerns and to inspire the will and commitment of the people. Of course, this reciprocal interaction materialises within the specificities of a socially pronounced religion like Orthodoxy, and a state which promotes the established faith. When transposed into a spiritual and ethical vision, the enactment of political authority rises above perceptions of a contracted artefact and unites the human hypostases into the actualisation of order and

the enhancement of collective virtue. "Patriotism and the police can unite individuals only so far: God is needed to close the gap."⁶

Orthodox perceptions of collective virtue are constituted upon ethical prescriptions of personal and social conduct—by references to an agapeistic moral content—that render the contractual cohesion of the community attainable. The religious delineation of human life commences with the baptismal initiation in the ecclesiastical body, which is then reiterated by a recurrent participation in sacraments. In the process, a measure of significance is bestowed to distinctive values and relations, like the family, which are integral to notions of personhood. On the basis of this evaluative cluster, the interactive foundations between Orthodoxy and political authority are delimited and constructed. The members of the worshipping community hence become volitional citizens of the profane polity under conditions that pronounce their religiously induced convictions. In substantial measure, the convergence of a spiritual and a political or national allegiance is diachronically engendered within Serbian Orthodoxy, as she encodes a non-universal concretion of an eternal religion and non-negotiable truth claims. The Orthodox faith is not an attenuated tradition propagated by specific and politically important sections of the polity. In fact, variable forms of political authority and their normative purpose would be incomprehensible without attention to Orthodoxy, as the enduring projection of Serbianhood.

Without the religious contours of acceptable wisdom—truth—, adjudicating arbitrariness and minimising social entropy, designated political structures could not be sustained. The foregoing terms of acceptable wisdom are corollary to ecclesiastically defined notions, communal perceptions and concepts of selfhood, daily routines and cumulated lines of thinking,⁷ which are internalised and externalised by Orthodoxy. Under these circumstances, personal commitment to social-political processes is not solely attributed to an autonomous exercise of human agency. Instead, the legitimisation of the political sphere is founded on perceptions of righteousness, which reproduce cognitive forms of Orthodox reasoning. Importantly, these cognitive precepts⁸ are accepted as a residual part of a historically sanctioned religion, conferred on the community by its venerated forefathers, celebrated heroes and martyrs. The Orthodox genealogy of faith and her mythopoeic content objectify personal or collective experiences through the recurrent construction of a physical and metaphysical reality and reconciliation of particularities and peculiarities. In other words, "what religion brings into conflict, politics cannot easily reconcile; what religion unites, politics cannot easily divide".⁹

The political appropriation of or reckoning with Orthodoxy is centred on the moral penetrability of the latter, which is reflected in the harmonisation of power structures and patterns of interaction. Political authority is variably confined in religiously invoked ethical norms (piety, "love ethic", sacrifice, altruism and notions of right and wrong), as these are socially experienced and perpetuated. The variability of this assumption is dependent upon the religiosity and ethos of political leaders and the attachment to or observance of the sacred. The political externalisation of these moral perceptions is contextually bound to a social environment that presupposes and is motivated by the same evaluative principles. A framework of social values, rules, customs and traditions would reciprocally determine the communal allegiances to political causes. However, it would be reductive if not fallacious to consider the pursuance and exercise of political authority as a manifestation of religious orthopraxis. While national and personal perceptions of belonging may involve a sacred referent, the requirements and operative needs of a polity¹⁰ extend beyond the metaphysical prescriptions that a religion could provide. Orthodoxy's emotive and spiritual appeals are politically significant under conditions of crisis, unrest or a threat, which require societal cohesion—subjecting her political capital to ambiguous, populist–demagogic manipulation.

Political appeals to the worshipping congregation are, though, mediated by the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the "custodian" of the deity and the Orthodox doctrine. The Orthodox hierarchy constitutes the core of the religious community upon which notions of the physical–moral union are construed and propagated. The emergent Orthodox ethos could neither be politically ignored nor socially abbreviated as it is spatially and historically embedded within the organisational structures of the collectivity. In this context, a question arises as to whether Orthodoxy, in particular her functional content (*cultus*), is a primary form of political expression. The answer could be in the affirmative if the community's profane and spiritual hypostases are separated and the ecclesiastical inception of the former is identified as Orthodoxy's sole purpose.¹¹ Rather more realistically, the answer would be negative, considering the transcending and non-mundane references of Orthodoxy. The Orthodox proclamation of the Triune God subordinates the political realm to honoured, religious patterns that are tautological with the sacralised, national genealogy. Political and societal solidarities are interwoven with the vestigial expressions of Orthodox commitment and spirituality. Ideally, "political powers which do not reflect or place themselves under these transcendent standards are not to be heeded, obeyed or

trusted".¹² In reality, the earthly—profane—, political embodiment of the Orthodox experience is intimately attached and ritually allied to the nation—state.¹³

The recurrent, ceremonial enactment of established religious forms (sacramental acts, blessings or memorial services) shaped and reproduced in a—more or less—similar manner enhances the inward and outward visibility of the polity and concretise the parameters of social reality. Upon the repeated nature¹⁴ of these rites, a culturally sanctioned lineage of thought crystallises and coherent perceptions of leadership,¹⁵ territoriality (geography of faith) and values, are distilled. These evaluative—relatively closed—categories are essential for the cognitive and orientational capacities¹⁶ of both individuals and society alike. Actual or "ideal" political leaders are juxtaposed with prescribed and customary notions of personhood, as these are historically or religiously propagated. Participation in or abstinence from sacramental acts often produces a significant, cognitive effect among the members of the community. Since Orthodoxy locates and defines the personal experience in relation to the collectivity, the religious affinity of a political leader (actual or potential) is elevated into a matter of communal¹⁷ importance. In other words, notions of selfhood are correlated with the Orthodox national lineage, as this is ritually re-enacted and religiously reflected upon. While the political commitment to these ceremonial rituals is variable and contextually bound, oscillating from a lackadaisical adherence to an emotional, spiritual involvement, their importance for the societal cohesion and legitimacy of the Orthodox polity is essential.

Yet, Orthodoxy's relation to political ideologies is not obviated in a similar concrete manner. The Orthodox emphasis upon personal righteousness, the human social predisposition, the agapeistic moral content, religious rituals, the family unit and the entailed respect of its members could be ascribed to different ideological positions. To that end, the volitional human—divine communion is not reconciled with the liberal support for critical reflection or political autonomy. Liberalism¹⁸ acknowledges an ethically prescribed, (possibly of a religious origin) citizenship, however, strongly defends the creation of secular and autonomous associations, upon which political reason could be forged. Orthodox morality and notions of collective duty generally prescribe to conservative political forms, which promote deference of historically legitimate structures. Serbian conservative references pertain to the conservation—propagation—of traditional wisdom¹⁹ and authority, which are synonymous with the national genealogy. Their political expression upholds unitary principles of organisation—as these have

historically persisted within the national developmental cycle—from the institution of the monarchy to the authoritarian, recent past. These political proclivities have also been subjected to the project of Yugoslav socialism, the humanist and communal foundations of which broadly approximated Orthodox Christian prescriptions. The dialectical relation, or rather the mutual—notional—negation of communism and Orthodoxy, constituted a traumatic experience for the latter, under conditions of a sustained, profane challenge for the physical and metaphysical loyalties of her worshiping congregation.

The communist organisation, interpretation and mobilisation of the physical (human and inanimate) environment provided an unprecedented political dilemma for *Homo Serbicus*. Could their personal and collective existence persevere under the influence of and identification with a secular "religion"?

Serbian Orthodoxy and Yugoslav Communism

A "choice" between the sacred kingdom
of heaven or a secular heaven on earth

According to Karl Marx, "ideas are materialised within a nation to the extent that a need for them exists... It is not enough that thought should strive toward realisation; existence itself must enter into thought".²⁰ The need or rather the social-political conditions for the consolidation of Yugoslav communism were induced through strife and war. Serbian collective notions, as symbolically charged beliefs which supported certain modes of action and anathematised others, chronologically preceded the conclusion of World War II. Communal social structures, like the *zadruga*,²¹ the anti-individualistic ethos of Orthodoxy and the Serbian genocide by the Ustasha regime created an ideal context for the maturation of communist thought.²² Yet, the Yugoslav communist experience and its ideology were countered by the pervasive character of Serbian Orthodoxy, which fused physical-metaphysical notions into one essence.

Their ensuing interaction revolved around the development of Yugoslav communism as an atheistic, economic construction and an encompassing system, which combined the historical reconstitution of the world—physical and spiritual—upon the precepts of ideological "rationalism".²³ Under these conditions, the societal penetrability of Yugoslav communism was theoretically justified on the grounds that it constituted a particular expression of

a universally²⁴ applicable principle (of Western inception), which was territorially bound and correlated to a physical hypostasis. At the same time, communism aimed to spiritually unite the socialist congregation into the supra-national reality of Yugoslavia.²⁵ In other words, Yugoslav communism entailed an important “religious” content, upon which the formation of a profane political order was pursued.

Perceptions of a collective life where material possessions were shared among the various members of the enclave are historically traced in primitive Christianity. As the earthly creation was intended for all, the dissolution of private property advanced and purified the spiritual commitment and cohesion of the ecclesiastical community and combated material egoism, indulgence and dependence. On a limited basis, the ideological procreation of these principles was also advanced by the notion of equality in the French Revolution. It was observed that “since all (people) have the same needs and the same faculties let them henceforth have the same education and diet.”²⁶ These proto-communist ideas were of a primarily agrarian reference—where precepts of a collective life were culturally more consonant. The diversification of human labour—through industrialisation—re-addressed these social balances, creating a pretext for self-alienation and exploitation. Upon these assumptions, Marxist communism was conceived, aspiring to change the operative conditions of industrial production and eradicate the division of mental and physical labour. Personal and collective fulfilment were to be obtained not through the equal allotment of material possessions, but rather through the uniform ownership of the existing resources.

Yugoslav communism broadly shared these ideological beliefs in the social reconstruction of a multi-ethnic society with variable degrees of development. The limited urbanisation and agrarian lives of the Serbian population, their patriarchal references and history of centralised leadership were juxtaposed with a communal ethos that extended beyond national peculiarities. Following the collapse of the first Yugoslav state, the dislocation of war, the human losses, and the cognitive discontinuity socialism set to organise a new political and moral order—particular to the people of the region. The character of Yugoslav communism was solidified through the Partisan movement. In the process, the national self was denied, in order to achieve real fraternity. The “oceanic feeling”, the ecstasy of solidarity described by Arthur Koestler²⁷ became the emotive ground for revolutionary commitment. Political authority and ideology were intertwined in a system which offered a single-cause explanation for phenomena, depending

upon social-political, economical or cultural processes.²⁸ Marxism turned into a mystical exercise with initiatory rites, devout zealots, esoteric dogmas and procedures, where the latent meaning was something different from its manifest expression. Adherence to the Yugoslav communism gradually permeated societal structures and relationships in an allegiance that partly emasculated personal and communal, critical faculties.²⁹

The autocephaly of the communist sect was confirmed in 1948 when the contentious issue of Yugoslav autonomy in regional affairs resulted in the Tito-Stalin split.³⁰ The 1948 Yugoslav rebellion was the first breach in the world-wide structure of the Stalinist monolith and revealed the contradictory relation of Russian nationalism and revolutionary parties, which pertained to their "national" situation.³¹ The Yugoslav departure from the Soviet pursuance of communist certitudes replaced an external order—where Lenin was the only god and Stalin his sole prophet—with the evolution of a hierarchical and indigenous consciousness of a supra-national character. Through the processes of evolutionary merger and revolutionary fusion, pluralist socialism, co-operative federalism, self-management and polycentric regionalism,³² Serbian loyalties oscillated between Orthodoxy and the socialist religion. These diverse contours (Orthodox-communist) of identification apportioned the same, spatial and human context for their respective templates of the collective and of selfhood. The communist project emphasised the rational reconstruction of the physical environment and the creation of a new identity upon the precepts of modernity, egalitarian social mobility and stratification. Temporal references focused on the achievements of the present or the anticipation of a future utopia. The religious phenomenology of communism was corporeal in an amalgamation of ceremonial rites, procedural norms and common expectations and experiences.³³ The socialist congregation adhered to a civic referent that atomised³⁴ the personal existence in the noetic³⁵ confines of omniscient communal humanism, the metaphysical hypostases of which were secular and Yugoslav. Axiological attitudes and exegetic procedures were hence provided by scientific materialism,³⁶ which attributed the origins of humankind to evolutionary processes rather than divine creation.

Under these circumstances, Orthodoxy amounted to a national bourgeois anachronism, which circumscribed proletarian destiny and identity. Orthodox convictions were oppressive superstitions or superfluous beliefs within communist rationalism. Consequently, the incessant coalescence of religious and national notions could not be reconciled with a civic-sacred-content, striving for the physical and metaphysical allegiances of the same

deity. Religious signifiers were deciphered into their profane manifestations from which Yugoslav communism attempted to reform behavioural and relational norms, operative modes and introspective perceptions of personhood. The ensuing, reconstructive processes were almost religious in both their character and substance. Human sociability constituted the core of the communist sect, on which the propensity for co-operation and rationality were forged. Civic prescriptions for salvation related to volitional creative labour that nurtured the “redeemable” human being and channelled its considerable potential. The secular rites of party membership replaced religious, worshipping practices, while ecclesiastical hymnology and iconography were substituted with the aesthetical praises of the revolutionary cause. Similarly, the Serbian geography of faith was incorporated in the communist construction of Yugoslavia, which had several federative hypostases (six republics and two autonomous provinces), but one collective essence. Within this communal entity, the knowledge of truth emanated solely from the omnipotent leader, whose wisdom and providence preserved the order of his creation—supported by coercion; *Goli Otok*.

As a producer and vector of explicit assumptions of selfhood, Yugoslav communism ultimately failed to address the esoteric needs of its Orthodox adherents. The constitutive flaw of communism lay in its propensity to physically actualise variable goals in a specific spatial-temporal context,³⁷ which (by definition) was intelligible to the members of the socialist “congregation”. Communist legitimacy rested either on the recurrent economic achievements of the system or—in their absence—on coercive means of control, which confined human expectations to a rigid, earthly substance. Even the sustained sense of historical urgency or the political quality of metaphysical references to social harmony could not invalidate the binding beliefs of Orthodoxy and Serbianhood. In fact, the impact of these profane shortcomings externalised the spiritual void of the Yugoslav religion. Yet, as the communist project could (in hindsight) be dismissed as Orthodoxy’s testable antithesis, certain of its manifestations affected the personal and collective assumptions of its Serbian faithful.

Communism constructed, through intensive modernisation and industrialisation, secular forms of orthopraxis that were reproduced mechanically or observed religiously. New opportunities emerged for the Serbian peasantry and women, elevating their placement in the socialist congregation from a *creature* to an equal *creator*. The linear Yugoslav approach on the issue of collectivisation—compared with the doctrinal commitment of communist counterparts—and the pursuit of various policies, (decentralisa-

tion and regionalism) aimed at the community's social harmony further enhanced the allegiance and support for its cause. Unlike Orthodoxy, the human "benefits" of communism were experienced within the earthly world and could be manipulated for greater felicity. Although freedom depended on the political superstructure, the latter remained a human inception that could be altered in the pursuit of profane or sacred autonomy. In particular, autonomy from the Orthodox core was pronounced by the ambivalent relation between the ecclesiastical fellowship and the state.³⁸

However, the "religious" prominence of communism pertained to a limited temporal scope and a questionable emotive depth. While the Yugoslav authorities attempted to circumscribe the social appeal of Orthodoxy,³⁹ her spiritual content was propagated through the family unit (nuclear or extended) and the entailed forms of kinship. Under these secular conditions, the sacramental acts of baptism and marriage were prohibited, as their sacred nature was irreconcilable with the monopolistic power of communism. Yet, the celebration of the *slava* and the tradition of *kumstvo* persisted within the personal domain as religious-cultural undercurrents. On a collective level, the communist cause remained susceptible to implicit, national impulses—religiously invoked or culturally reproduced—, a societal fact brought to the public attention by the Rankovic⁴⁰ affair.

Through the course of time, Orthodoxy ultimately demystified communism as a conceptually and practically flawed expression of profane and secular intentions. In reciprocal fashion, the experience of Yugoslav communism challenged Orthodoxy through the exposure of the material substance of her deity⁴¹ and the human propensity to pursue reason, freedom, autonomy or happiness in the scope of the earthly hypostases.

Josip Broz Tito

The "charismatic creator" of the Yugoslav communist religion

The sacredness of Yugoslav communism, on which further notions of legitimacy were conferred, could be neither evaluated as a "natural" social progression nor as the outcome of convention.⁴² As a purely ideological construct, the Yugoslav experiment initially approximated the convictions of the Soviet experience. In its specific application, the political authority and legitimacy of the system originated in the leader himself, Josip Broz Tito and the power of his message, which transcended regional particularities.

These supra-national references were not accidental, as Tito's genealogy pertained to an ethnically mixed Slovene-Croat parentage.⁴³ Tito hence conceived of a socialist system that correlated social mobility and stratification to a civically construed selfhood. The articulation of the Yugoslav creation rested upon the leader's personal charisma—the interpreter of communist orthopraxis. Tito's charisma combined the Weberian notions of a bureaucratic and legalistic ethos with personal authority, “endowed with... superhuman... [and] exceptional... qualities”.⁴⁴ These qualities were apparent in the Partisan movement that liberated the country from German occupation and brought to a conclusion, a prolonged period of inter-ethnic strife. In this context, it should be noted that the Partisan success was externally facilitated by specific conditions, the Italian surrender in 1943, which gradually enhanced the support for the Yugoslav cause.⁴⁵ The proselytisation to the communist faith of “brotherhood and unity” commenced in 1945 with the creation of socialist Yugoslavia.

Tito's perceptions of and approach to Orthodoxy formed an aspect of the broader project of a secular society, based on Yugoslav civic patriotism. It follows that Orthodoxy—as a Serbian foundation signifier—constituted an obstruction for the proletarian power-base, whose nature was justified by circumstances and not ethnicity.⁴⁶ The prevalent socialist ideology could tolerate linguistic differences and cultural specificities as non-essential personal references, which did not challenge the communist order.⁴⁷ Republican and/or provincial borders were accordingly advocated on administrative grounds that neither divided nor undermined (at least, in theory) the cohesion of the Yugoslav State.⁴⁸ This tactical interpretation of the nationality question distilled the experiences of the Austrian multi-ethnic state—where civic perceptions of unity surmounted regional, linguistic and religious associations—and the Russian, communist structure. In the case of the latter, the preponderance of Marxism held greater value than various ideals (locality, Orthodoxy, or language) in the pursuit and consolidation of political power.⁴⁹ The Yugoslav implementation of the communist project depended on the reproduction of secular conditions for the propagation of the socialist message.

In response, perceptions of dissatisfaction or even of unequal treatment were initially⁵⁰ expressed among the constitutive peoples of Yugoslavia. Notions of geographical emasculation sprung from the creation of internal boundaries that in certain instances of regional autonomy (Kosovo) amounted to the symbolic amputation of the Orthodox cosmology. Tito's reconciliatory approach on the subject revolved around the principle of

"divide and rule", upon which policies were forged as long as they did not permanently estrange sections of the population. Instead, the country's "secular" catharsis concentrated on the advocates and organisation of the confessional communities. The arrest and trial of Archbishop Stepinac, charged for his affinity with the Ustasha regime and the prosecution of Serbs (in pursuit of Italian-Vatican interests⁵¹) attempted to pacify theoretically⁵² a war legacy—WW II. From an Orthodox perspective, monastic property rights, religious practices and instruction were curtailed in favour of a socialist ideological monopoly. These social propositions acquired a sense of historical urgency because, as already suggested, in the institutional framework of communism issues of conduct and representation were politically mediated.

The attempt to construct societal autonomies and communist-secular-alternatives from Orthodoxy, however, did not alienate the Serb peoples (as probably expected) from the communist cause and its leader. Indeed, Tito personified certain notional and evaluative precepts, which correlated to the idiosyncratic core of Serbianhood—including the restoration of a state that was seen as Greater Serbia. The Serbian population could identify (to a variable degree) with the politically induced image of the pragmatist, the heroic defender of Yugoslav solidarities, the arbitrator, the renowned statesman and the liberator from foreign occupation. In spite of economic hardships, perceptions of a chronologically condensed social achievement were prevalent in rural⁵³ and urban areas, springing from Yugoslav and communist references. The introduction through Yugoslav socialism of reform, innovation, decentralisation, a considerable retreat from collectivisation and non-alignment further propagated these beliefs. "Tito's way" evolved into a mythopoeic content, which exploited the imperfect application of ideas and ironed out existential problems and inconsistencies. The appreciation of this conceptualised "reality" related—primarily—to its socialising and indoctrinating function and the heroic depiction of historical events. Tito's creation maintained an "awareness" of cohesion and support through symbolic gestures, including frequent visits to Serbian monasteries and churches⁵⁴ that aimed to appease and engage the emotions of his congregation.

Following the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Tito's communist religion has been dismissed as an irreconcilable (when compared to Orthodoxy) inception of a Croat and Slovene nationalist and even as the construct-artefact—of a Mason⁵⁵ and Vatican sympathiser. While communism dissolved into an unsustainable, profane system, Tito's cult is often revered—

among the Serbian peoples⁵⁶—as a testament to a secular “Heaven on Earth”. Of course, the nature of these memories pertains to the particular circumstances of crisis and nostalgia that obfuscate the cognitive capacities of the population or sections of it. However, they are also indicative of the motivation and power that personal charisma and material achievements could elicit from an Orthodox and “spiritually” predisposed collectivity.

The Serbian Monarchy

The political “residue” of an Orthodox national genealogy

Contrary to the universal character of the communist rhetoric, the scientific materialism and the political prescriptions of the Titoist construction, the institution of the Serbian monarchy constituted a specific political expression of a national lineage of thought and an Orthodox confessional fellowship confined in space and time. The introduction of Orthodoxy, as a signifier of communal subjectivity, was forged upon concrete administrative references (*Nomocanon*), which delineated the cohesion and function of the ecclesiastical congregation. In the political domain, corollary, institutional forms developed which supported the centralisation of defence, power and authority under the legitimate jurisdiction of the Serbian monarch. Uniformity, moral guidance, shared values and solidarities were formulated upon the synergetic relationship of Orthodoxy with the sovereign ruler,⁵⁷ who personified and propagated her social cause explicitly. The monarchical political principle hence provided the structural parameters for the systematic organisation of the Serbian medieval nobility, the clergy and the state.⁵⁸

As Ivo Andric observed, “conditions of life change but a class remains what it is, for only so can it exist and as such it will die”.⁵⁹ With regard to the institution of the Serb monarchy, the “conditions of life” changed profoundly through the experience of the Ottoman occupation and the ensuing interruption of a culture of monarchical dependence and protection. The remnants of the Serbian royal past were primarily engendered and emulated in the political character, mythology and ethos of the nation that remained attached to the soil and the agricultural means of subsistence. The Serbian monarchs were members—even venerated patriots—of the national collectivity and their recollection was crucial in the reproduction of political, military and ecclesiastical hierarchies. In the nineteenth century,

when Serbia gained independence, the monarchical past provided the political foundations and references for the new polity. The Serbian national rebirth had a princely⁶⁰ form, that produced authoritarian and anti-authoritarian tendencies under the intermittent leadership of the Obrenovic and the Karadjordjevic dynasties.⁶¹ These political developments revolved around an armed peasantry, in a nation of small-landowners, with strong family particularisms and a prevalent patriarchy. Under the influence of oligarchic rule and enlightened despotism the process of national reconstruction and the struggle for constitutional and parliamentary government in Serbia⁶² were pursued. On the basis of this political heritage, the Serbian peoples subsequently contributed in the inception, the actualisation and the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

The political implications of the Serbian monarchical idea are manifested in centralised and autocratic proclivities, perceptions of personal leadership and authority and the subjection of the private (civic) sphere to public scrutiny and control. The societal appeal of the Serbian monarchy should be attributed to the national Orthodox connotations that historically bind the institution to the structures and purpose of the ecclesiastical congregation, the latter being both a form of spiritual practice and a referent of temporal power. In view of the internal evaluative and orientational crisis in Serbia and the fragmentation of the perceived⁶³ national territory, the political option of the monarchy has retained a societal appeal. To that end a question arises with regard to the Orthodox, religious content of a revived monarchy and its potential form and substance.

An indivisible, autocratic and non-delegable (neo)monarchy that presupposes the correlation of personal spiritual practice with the sovereign ruler would be constitutionally obsolete and socially unsustainable. Even the Serbian notional propensity for delimited power and administration—induced by the binary of cultural and communist experiences—could not legitimate the remote prospect of a royal autocrat. Variable internal and regional (rural and urban) support⁶⁴ on the matter render the monarchical project a divisive rather than a unifying political prescription. Orthodox-oriented movements, as the ideological backbones of the Serbian royal cause, are hence doctrinally irreconcilable with the universal and spiritual disposition of Orthodoxy. Although the institution of the monarchy has historically approximated the Orthodox nature of Serbianhood, the restoration of royal authority, as the profane component of the national religion, would not be central to present-day conditions.

The Chetnik Movement

“Destiny was merciless... when it threw me into the most difficult whirlwinds”⁶⁵

The Chetnik movement owed its organisational “inception” to the military circumstances of World War II. As an armed resistance movement, it concentrated the efforts of sections of the Serbian population⁶⁶ against the German occupation and the attacks of the Ustasha regime in Croatia. However, the objectives and structure of this military faction extended beyond the mere principle of defence and involved the propagation of a Serbian administrative core within a liberated Yugoslavia. The Chetniks aimed to use the opportunity of the war⁶⁷ in order to consolidate their internal political and military position in relation to their Yugoslav opponents. Their aspirations were, accordingly, national in form and political-military in content, as they prescribed to a homogenous territorial entity that included the entire area, populated by Serbs (the Ravna Gora movement), delineated by the Orthodox precepts of the Serbian nation.⁶⁸ The use of the term Chetnik had symbolic, historical connotations for the movement, pertaining to the military formations (*ceta*)⁶⁹ from the nineteenth century that fought against the Ottoman forces. It follows that the political appeal of the Chetnik cause was rather limited and incompatible, when compared to the Yugoslav nature of the Partisan movement. The ensuing dichotomy of perceptions and aims culminated into a conflict between the “two masters”,⁷⁰ in which the communists were pronounced as the primary adversaries. In tune with the “narrowness” of their project, the Chetniks conducted a low intensity and often fragmented⁷¹ military campaign and participated in questionable political alliances.⁷² After the Partisan victory, in 1945, the Chetnik cause declined and its leader, Draza Mihailovic, was caught, tried and executed for war crimes.

The aspirations of a Greater Serbia, the monarchical and anti-communist political references and the propagation of conservative social perceptions ideologically aligned the Chetnik movement with Orthodoxy. The ecclesiastical acknowledgement of the Chetnik cause related to the circumstances of the Orthodox congregation and the prosecution of Serbs on confessional grounds. Religious support for the Chetniks remained implicit but salient among the members of the Serbian clergy,⁷³ as the conditions of war circumscribed the scope of ecclesiastical activity. The consequences of this alignment were considerable for the Serbian Church, following the military defeat of the Chetniks and the establishment of a

communist order. As already suggested, the communist authorities excluded religion from educational, social and political functions but also fragmented the Orthodox deity into autonomous congregations (for instance, the Macedonian Church). More importantly, the Chetnik movement exposed the Serbian Orthodox susceptibility to considerable political manipulation and mobilisation that sprung from its identification as the saviour of Serbianhood, the spiritual defender of the Fatherland and the enduring propagator of the national genealogy.

Slobodan Milosevic

The political manipulation of "Saint-Savism"

The political rise and monopolistic authority of Slobodan Milosevic provide additional and contemporary manifestations of Orthodoxy's susceptibility to manipulation and populist mobilisation. As a spatial and temporal referent of the Serbian being, Orthodoxy pertains to a significant political capital. Although the relation between spiritual and profane-political expressions is variable, Orthodoxy concretises a broad, populist potential for social awareness and action. Within a cultural framework of intense struggle for individual assertion and authority, Orthodoxy confers the political domain with a measure of moral legitimacy. Serbian Orthodoxy has historically coalesced with authoritarian and oligarchic advocates, conditions of *endless strife*, notions of loyalty, solidarity, ethnocentrism, social conformity and centralised administrations. Upon these cultural-historical referents, Slobodan Milosevic forged the perimeter—political and economic—of his autocratic construct. As such, his political tenure is construable as a contextually bound prescription or distortion of the existential anxieties of a disoriented and volatile congregation.

Slobodan Milosevic approximated the Serbian cause through a predetermined fusion of historical and mythical time, which viewed the national salvation in imminent and irrevocable terms. Serbian historical patterns ascribed to an underlying plan whose predestined denouement was chronologically identified with an idealised future (*Endzeit*). The Serbian inability to pursue traditional (centralising or unitary) aspirations in a disintegrating Yugoslavia and the social and economic deterioration of the country created the temporal pretext for a national revival. Milosevic seized the opportunity for popular mobilisation and action through "the amalgamation of unsatisfied social demands with fears linked to the risk of exclusion

and social breakdown”.⁷⁴ He chose Kosovo—the nation’s historic and territorial *omphalos*—for the formal announcement of his salvational cause. His position as a national leader⁷⁵ was sealed on 24 April 1987 when he assured an anxious Serbian crowd that “no one will be allowed to beat you”.⁷⁶ Milosevic elevated himself into the designated defender of the pride, national dignity and moral convictions of Serbianhood. Serbia accepted his leadership, while lacking the coherent structure, ideology, a clear programme or capacity to attain its nation-building objective. In consequence, personal ambitions were fused with the collective entity in a relationship that traumatised and handicapped the latter through the circumscription of public debate and scrutiny in favour of the military reconstitution of Greater Serbia (the Ravna Gora movement).

From an Orthodox perspective, religious support for Slobodan Milosevic varied between explicit sanction of his political decisions and implicit disapproval. Milosevic polarised the profane loyalties of the Serbian Orthodox clergy and faithful through the propagation of a siege mentality and conspiracy theories. During the events leading to the military campaigns in Croatia and Bosnia, the ecclesiastical body officially embraced Milosevic’s cause in articles published in *Pravoslavlje*, the official organ of the Serb Patriarchate.⁷⁷ These Orthodox views were slightly modified as atrocities committed in the Bosnian war became apparent and could not be ignored.⁷⁸

Through the contrast of these (not overwhelmingly) different perceptions, relational pattern(s) emerges between Orthodoxy and her political dispositions toward ideologies, individual leaders and their claims. To that end, Slobodan Milosevic constitutes a “revised” projection of national archetypes, formulated upon the evaluative cluster of Serbianhood and Orthodox cosmology, which provide an overall scheme conducive to messianic politicians. While Milosevic could be abased to the political effect or manifestation of a cultural system, Orthodoxy appears to respond invariably to personalities or causes that appropriate her enduring desire for a nationally unified congregation. Orthodoxy’s vision of the political realm as a physical embodiment of a sacred lineage of thought raises serious questions with regard to her profane judgement and the actualisation of her social project. Milosevic’s relation to the Orthodox Church pertains to one aspect of this equation, as the latter constitutes the visible and hierarchical expression of a sacred content. Yet, the question remains, as to whether, in the sacralisation of the Serbian identity, Orthodoxy has conferred the dependence of the “creature” from the “Creator” into the national political culture.⁷⁹

Orthodoxy and the Culture of Power in Serbia

"Follow your fine phrases

to the point where they become incarnate..."⁸⁰

Orthodoxy—as already suggested—concretises the existential needs of her worshippers into a transcendent and sacred referent. The social projection of religious consciousness permeates and delineates the conduct of institutions, structures or relationships, while conferring meaning to personal and collective life. The ecclesiastical structures engender the moral precepts of the nation, formulate social aims or objectives, congregate the faithful, bestow the family with religiously sanctioned purpose and create perceptions of selfhood, belonging and inner convictions. Orthodoxy unites the Serbian community in an organised manner through the exercise of choice that is limited in an overt and a covert fashion. Orthodox notional prescriptions of a right belief and orthopraxis are hence inseparable from the social content and forms of life (urbanised, industrial or rural), which also pertain to the configuration and complexity of the political sphere, its protagonists, ideologies and programmes. Orthodoxy's holistic concern with the condition and felicity of the human being (physical and metaphysical) renders her *political*, "to the extent that (she) participates in the procedure of solving (societal) conflicts".⁸¹ Her pervasive and communal nature though extends beyond the role of a protective and influential association to that of an enduring moral, temporal and spatial signifier, legitimating the national and political structures.

Orthodoxy's contribution to the Serbian political culture could be measured in terms of the aggregate and interactive impact, which her moral prescriptions, spirituality, or historic-mythopoeic content have on the national community. Religious notions of righteousness involve the observance of collective norms or rites that characterise the Serbian national experience. In other words, the participation in the sacramental acts conditions and propagates the collective ethos upon which the social structure is forged. While Orthodoxy does not ascribe to concrete political forms,⁸² her social disposition places a greater significance upon the function and maintenance of the social context. The Orthodox deference to Tradition establishes a political culture of subjection, in which the individual accepts and trusts the judgement of a designated authority. Political power is constituted on the actualisation of Orthodox references that distinguish between the eternal Fatherland (an "imagined" cultural constant) and the different, profane regimes.⁸³ Considering the changeable nature of human cognition

at different points in time, Orthodoxy provides the underlining traits and permanent characterisations of a diachronic heritage. The Orthodox mnemonic, symbolic content forms the core of the Serbian political culture, in the sense that the nation, as the physical embodiment of a spiritual entity, "[is] to be distinguished not by [its] falsity/genuineness, but by the style, in which [it] is imagined".⁸⁴ The religious mobilisation of ancestral bias immerses the individual into the larger community and in the process delimits a prescribed culture of power relations and order.

Orthodoxy's demiurgic power pertains to the spiritual ability to affect and inspire people, who act in concert in the pursuance of metaphysical salvation. The political transmutation of this religious assumption incorporates perceptions of good intention with notions of coercion, force, authority and even violence in the construction of the relationship⁸⁵ between the étatist agent and the often-passive citizen. The Serbian culture of power evolves on force differentials⁸⁶ and a measure of relative passivity with which society customarily responds to prescribed political discourses. On an institutional level, ecclesiastical and state structures delineate the procedural norms, profane and sacred, of social operations and functions. Historically, the Serbian étatist culture is a derivative of recurrent experiences of foreign occupation and invasion⁸⁷ that destroyed indigenous societal organisations and contributed to centralised, institutional forms. At the same time, the cultural perpetuation of an enclave mentality has conferred Orthodoxy with an enduring legitimacy, emanating from the need to spiritually preserve and propagate the national cause. Orthodox perceptions of the human-divine communion or free will with which the worshipper is bestowed subsequently permeate the political ethos of the community. Human freedom is experienced as the consequence of the synergetic relation with the Creator (made in Gods' image) and the volitional fellowship in an Orthodox cosmos. Orthodox freedom is delimited upon the physical and metaphysical participation of the human being in the ecclesiastical congregation and the observance of spatial and temporal references. Orthodoxy's power is consensual, deriving "its legitimacy from the initial getting together (*the Church of Christ on earth*) and needs no justification, being inherent, in the very existence of political communities".⁸⁸ The Serbian worshippers thus fulfil their spiritual-existential aspirations through the creation of a harmonious, religious order of trust. The political articulation of these Orthodox principles (hierarchical and unitary) then pervade the institutional cluster of the Serbian polity.

The actual relationship of Serbian Orthodoxy with the political realm is

one of mutual reinforcement over time, making it difficult to separate values from the performance of the political system as a whole. The Serbian political culture presents symptoms of a *sultanist* proclivity, in which "public and private are fused, there is a strong tendency toward familial power... a lack of rationalised ideology... [and] the ruler acts... according to his own unchecked discretion".⁸⁹ Serbian political leaders have construed their authority upon the reproduction of prescribed, Orthodox norms of obedience, rendering society a "worshipper" rather than an active participant. Passivity and even abstinence from political processes are associated with a cultural environment that pertains to a specific social placement for each individual—gender, family, Church, community and nation. In these conditions, ossified notions of societal and economic interests and administrative structures circumscribe the inception—function of political alternatives⁹⁰ that remain socially obscure and ill defined. Tradition, historical memories and norms, emotions and symbols confine social autonomies, associations and interactions. As the Serb culture is forged upon distal historical recollections and pervasive communal beliefs (honour, heroism, manhood and family), there is a tendency to delimit the individual influence and contribution in the political processes.

The modernising perceptions of political and civil liberties⁹¹ were historically applied in the creation of an independent Serbian nation as references of cultural autarchy, homogeneity and collective subjectivity. In consequence, a weakly differentiated society and the individual are viewed as governable and abstract objects—subjects. Of course, a civic culture presupposes that its citizens balance activity and passivity, while reserving skills and commitment(s) for personal matters. However, the overarching loyalty to Serbianhood obscures the tension between civic obligation and performance, enabling the political leadership to exercise power with only limited responses to social demands. In the absence of substantial political antagonism between parties and groups, the Serbian culture of power is personal and demonstrates a propensity for charismatic or messianic leaders. According to Heinz Kohut, this political tendency is attributed to "a longing to merge with an all-powerful and all-knowing ideal figure [that]... finds an apparently irresistible fulfilment for many in their total submission to a Messianic leader and to his dogmatic beliefs".⁹²

Kohut's observation externalises the personal motivation in the choice of and attachment to a particular leader, but his assumption pertains to a specific prognosis of collective narcissism and low self-esteem that originate in the earliest childhood. Narcissism is defined "not by the target of

the instinctual investment (i.e. whether it is the subject himself or, other people) but by the nature or quality of the instinctual change”.⁹³ For example, an individual invests significant, psychological energies in his or her “relationship” with a leader that abases the latter into the experience of a self-object. Similar forms of narcissistic identification with and affection for political leaders could certainly be found in the Serbian polity. Yet, the correlation of low self-esteem and narcissism with the choice of a political leader provides an interesting, but rather limited analytical perspective of Serbian power relations. The preceding characterisations are of a personal nature and their collective projection could culminate into a reductive, social assessment. While the origin(s) of psychological attributes—in early childhood—could remain obscure, the baptismal initiation in the congregation constitutes the primary (observable) manifestation of the Serbian culture of power. Orthodoxy delineates the evaluative assumptions that determine the empirical application of intention, influence, dependence and sanction, upon which the relationship of *Homo Serbicus* with political leaders and institutions is forged.

Normative judgements of a political character then pertain to the reciprocal association of the Serbian (Orthodox) tradition and progress (*προοδος*), in which the latter is construed and confined by the social prominence of the former. The function and organisation of the Serbian community and the emergent culture of power are founded on the notional binary of tradition and progress, which are experienced in union. If separated, the actuality of progress results into degradation and alienation, while tradition disintegrates into a temporal abstract.⁹⁴

Serbian Orthodoxy and Democracy

“We do not believe that the church, in fact we,
her ecclesiastical representatives, would be above all,
and commanding all.”⁹⁵

Orthodoxy and democracy share common notional references in the prescriptive emphasis on co-operation, responsibility, participation and the potential for human progress and fulfilment. As conceptions of spiritual life and political practices, Orthodoxy and democracy profess certain kinds of equality, as desirable characteristics of their respective cosmologies. Orthodox equality is experienced within the confines of the human-divine communion (Orthodox universe), and refers to the observance of ethical

norms and the participation in sacraments which are binding for the faithful. Democratic equality historically pertained to the civic, Athenian prerogatives of *isegoria*—the right to address the governing assembly—and *isonomia*—the equality before the law. The assembly of citizens who gathered to debate and act on public matters evolved into a sovereign authority that politically departed from an oligarchic tyranny, the aristocracy and monarchic institutions. Participation in the affairs of the polity was theoretically and practically restricted to a small minority of the adult population, which invariably excluded others as unqualified. However, the development of the nation-state impacted upon the organisational scale and structure of the polity and shifted the social attention to the constitution of a supportive culture, which lends legitimacy to democratic structures. Democracy matured into forms of accepted political representation, including the coextensive rights of participation and universal suffrage, which accept a measure of political conflict as an inevitable part of a pluralistic life and social autonomies. Under the influence of democracy, Orthodox affinities are juxtaposed with a greater diversity that challenges the common bond of faith, history, language and national mythology through the political reality of ethnically and religiously heterogeneous, civic polities.

In the Serbian political context, the pervasive and exclusionary character of Orthodox-bound nationalism has historically aligned the societal cause with a prevalent culture of authoritarian and anti-liberal proclivities. Autonomous organisations or political traditions are delimited by a system that delegates power from above and has yet to evolve into democratic institutions, multiple and competing sources of information and a supportive substratum. Conditioned by the social-political, economic and cultural development of the Serb society, the political system operates as the profane and despotic equivalent of the Orthodox collectivity. Democracy is subsequently associated with a notional and empirical discourse, which combines "anarchy", "the Serbian Parliament", "the break-up of Yugoslavia" or "worthless freedom, and you don't have anything to eat."⁹⁶ In other words, feelings of positive effect for the political system, the belief that fellow citizens are trustworthy, or even the individual ability to influence decisions, are inherently weak and often absent within the Serbian society. The obscurity of a democratic, supportive culture raises the question as to whether transient and short-term political factors would have evolved in a different direction if the Serb polity had experienced an internally induced⁹⁷ process of secularisation.

Western secularisation introduced an existential antipode of rational knowledge to the social pronouncement of religious beliefs. Religious–confessional–attachment was viewed as an expression of human immaturity and as a subjection to an ecclesiastical tyranny that could be ultimately replaced and countered with reason.⁹⁸ This declaration of human autonomy from the sacred corresponded with the secular function of the polity, the cultural reproduction of ideas, education and administrative structures. Yet, affinitive dispositions continued to persist on a personal level, in response to metaphysical anxieties or as a residue of social conditioning in the family. These elements of individual religiosity provide a common ground with the Serbian Orthodox experience, whose scope and depth is different to each person, including non-practising Serbs and atheists. However, contrary to Western secularisation, the Serbian society continued to operate under conditions of heteronomy according to which norms and rules of conduct were initiated from beyond a purely political context, for instance, through a synergetic relationship with the Church.⁹⁹ In consequence, those social interactions and institutions through which the Serbian society made decisions, regarded binding by most members most of the time, pertain to an Orthodox content. Considering the presence of ethnic minorities in the Serbian polity, the Orthodox influence in the national political life has contributed to the alienation of sections of the population on confessional and ethnic grounds.

The intellectual suppositions of democracy evoke an image of the whole society as an overarching system of behaviour of social interactions and institutions, composed of a variety of autonomous and often “apolitical” sub-structures. The choice of the constitutive elements of the system—legislature, political parties, electorates and interests groups—correspond to and construe the desires, opinions and wishes of its members. To that end, Orthodoxy could present an obstacle to the natural coherence of the system, on the basis of her fusion and sacralisation of Serbianhood. The use of sacred symbols, traditions, language and identity in the legitimisation of the Serbian state undermine its political neutrality and result in social or ethnic fractions and exclusion from the consideration and support of the political system. The propensity of the Serbian leadership to deploy the discursive option of a sacred and transcendent cause renders it a heroic defender of the faith but not of democratic ideals. Serbian Orthodoxy may hence circumscribe the consolidation of democracy as an important ideological part of the étatist claim that it alone is capable of maintaining peace among its population.

Orthodoxy's impact upon Serbian democracy is neither measured nor delimited in terms of a collective stance aspiring to revise particular policies, similar to the American laws on abortion, the Sabbath closings in Israel, or the dressing code for women in Iran, to cite certain examples.¹⁰⁰ Having survived the communist assault of scientific rationalism, Orthodox cosmology does not focus her teleological and anthropocentric energies upon sectarian political action. Serbian Orthodoxy does not propagate the cause of splinter groups that lessen her dogmatic assumptions into primary forms of orthopraxis. As broad variation exists, with regard to the nature and intensity of religious commitment, political mobilisation on purely ecclesiastical grounds would be doctrinally unsustainable and socially dismissed. The cognitive "homogeneity" of the Serbian society conceals underlying cultural fractions (the "simultaneity of the unsimultaneous"¹⁰¹), when urban orientations are juxtaposed to rural traditional perceptions within the same spatial context. Serbian Orthodoxy aims to reconcile her congregation by ironing out these cultural differences on a spiritual and transcendent level—*extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ("outside the church there is no salvation"¹⁰²)—and not through the political reiteration of existing dichotomies.

The evolution of Serbian democracy ultimately suffers in the event that the polity adopts an Orthodox rhetoric ("outside the nation-state there is no salvation") to channel political struggles, to persuade its audience or generate socio-political action on cognitive, evaluative, regulatory and motivational matters.¹⁰³ In this context, Serbian Orthodoxy is elevated into a political signifier which could potentially overwhelm the consolidation of an "infant", democratic consciousness. Patriarch Pavle recently observed that "Our Creator requires us through our lives and faith to persuade 'wolves' into volitionally becoming a 'lamb' of God. But, in any case, it is more important that 'we' do not become 'wolves'".¹⁰⁴ If this allegorical notion of the "wolf" is politically transmuted in order to enhance the density¹⁰⁵ of the Orthodox fellowship and to curtail the confessional and ethnic autonomy of others, democracy would be permanently replaced by "political auctions, overnight changes in thought, most unnatural unions, and the selling of consciences".¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

This chapter assessed the influence of Orthodoxy in the evolution of the Serbian political culture. From a purely religious perspective, political affinities are the temporally circumscribed and “physical” expressions of human life. Political practices constitute the profane references for social cohesion, behavioural regulation and cognitive mobilisation. Ideally, the political alignment of worshippers should not contradict their pursuit of metaphysical salvation.

National (profane) and sacred fulfilment have for the greater part of the Serbian history coalesced, conferring the polity with an anti-individualistic ethos, a propensity for unitary organisation and a measure of societal passivity. Yugoslav communism attempted to curtail Orthodoxy’s prominence while appropriating the dependence of the “creature” from the “Creator” for the rational purposes of the socialist construction. Similarly, the Chetniks, the Serbian monarchy and Milosevic used the Orthodox content for the justification and political interpretation of the national cause.

As a foundation signifier, Serbian Orthodoxy remains a potent though unrefined political capital, which, in an effort to revise a profane scheme for the salvation of her congregation, was either unwittingly aligned or manipulated. Her discursive appreciation of freedom is solely bestowed upon her worshipping community and when politically (nationally) transmuted, engenders the potential for curtailed autonomy and exclusion. To that end, the question arises as to whether *Homo Serbicus* and *Femina Serbica* should aspire for societal autonomies or rather “sacrifice” their earthly lives for the “Kingdom of Heaven”. The recurrent emphasis on sacrificial salvation—distilled in the Kosovo myth—is the focus of the following chapter.

Notes

- 1 The concept of political culture incorporates the attitudes, symbols, practices and different modes of political conduct that characterise the Serbian polity.
- 2 Solovyev, an Orthodox Russian intellectual of the nineteenth century supported the view that the aim of the political state is not to create Heaven on Earth but rather to obstruct the deterioration of the latter into “hell”.
- 3 The original form of this proposition refers chronologically to the Middle Ages and the corollary ecclesiastical prominence or rather union of the sacred (*sacerdotium*) with the profane (*imperium* or *regnum*). Since the latter also re-

lated to the preservation of order and social protection and as Orthodoxy did not share the project of Reformation, the foregoing thought could be applied to the current analysis. This excerpt is quoted by Figgis, John Neville, *Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius 1414–1625* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), p. 5.

- 4 The Orthodox perception of Christian political parties is in direct contrast to the Western European experience which led to the concrete alignment of the sacred content with specific political projects. In consequence, the Italian and German paradigms are alien to the doctrinal notions of Eastern Christianity. Orthodoxy pertains to and is concerned with the transformation of the earthly world. Yet, contrary to secular political authority, her orientational references are not specific to material substance but rather involve a significant spiritual and transcendental content.
- 5 See Mappa, Sofia, *Ορθοδοξία και Εξουσία στην Ελληνική Κοινωνία*, p. 80.
- 6 Quoted by Melzer, Arthur M., "The Origin of the Counter-Enlightenment: Rousseau and the New Religion of Sincerity" in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, No. 2, June 1996, p. 351.
- 7 Ivan Strenski supports a similar line of thought with regard to the interaction between political authorities and religion, both of which constitute concrete, cultural expressions of life rather than mere ideological schemes. See Strenski, Ivan, "Political Culture, Religious Culture and Sacrifice" in Martin, Luther (ed.), *Religious Transformations and Socio-Political Change* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1993), pp. 293–94.
- 8 Institutional legitimacy, according to Mary Douglas, is conferred when the righteousness of the institution is grounded in nature and reason. See Douglas, Mary, *How Institutions Think* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), p. 45. Within the Orthodox cosmology references to nature and reason are religiously ascribed in a coherent line of thought, perpetually actualised and reproduced. It follows that the construction of the political sphere and the legitimacy of its institutions would be subjected to the broader cognitive precepts of Orthodoxy. The extent and impact of Orthodox reasoning would depend on the strength or absence of secular political convictions.
- 9 Quoted by Stackhouse, Max L., "Politics and Religion" in Eliade, Mircea (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*, Vol. 11 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), p. 410.
- 10 The pursuit of political and social modernisation often contradicts religiously invoked traditions and notions. A recent example of these partly contradictory processes was experienced in Greece, when the government decided to abolish any written references of confessional affinity (overwhelmingly, Orthodox Christian) in identity cards. The decision was justified on grounds of political and cultural approximation with the established norms of the European Union and was countered by ecclesiastically co-ordinated, popular unrest.
- 11 The Orthodox congregation is considered the primary expression of solidarity and social cohesion, which is sovereign and not subjected to profane forms of political authority.

- 12 Quoted by Stackhouse, Max L., "Politics and Religion", p. 415.
- 13 The political affinities of an Orthodox believer could vary in ideological form and substance, yet are delimited by the pursuance of—profane—policies, which propagate and defend the national cause—as defined in Orthodoxy's holistic and sacralising scope. The ensuing union of the confessional and national projects is respected and adhered to by every political leader—including the atheist communist(s). This mutual—reciprocal—understanding has until now precluded the occurrence of an ecclesiastical anathema to the polity. The issue of human—profane—obligations, emanating for the innate human nature, is discussed by Gavrilovic, Zarko, *Pogled u vecnost*, pp. 11–28.
- 14 The repeated nature of rituals could be justified as a part of the ecclesiastical calendar (in a cyclical perception of time) and in the form of sacramental acts, which delineate the various stages of human existence. According to another interpretation, religious rituals are crucial "reminders" that actualise through repetition a sense of sacred reality to the forgetful members of the community and the congregation. See Berger, Peter L., *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, p. 40.
- 15 See Kertzer, David I., *Rituals, Politics and Power* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 78–79.
- 16 See Neisser, Uri, *Cognition and Reality* (San Francisco: Freeman, 1976), p. 55.
- 17 The ensuing sense of Orthodox religious uniformity appears to be profoundly anti-individualistic, when considering the post-Reformation circumstances of Western Europe. The fusion of the Orthodox cause with the national-territorial nature of the state has historically produced specific conditions, propagating the social prominence of an officially sanctioned Orthodox dogma. Although constitutional provisions (for instance, in Greece) protect the rights of non-Orthodox affinities, the national leadership adheres customarily to the official Orthodox religion of the state. However, similar traditions are also encountered within the context of secular and individualistic cultures, which specifically determine the religion of their head of state. The Anglican denomination of the British Monarch is an example of the religious significance (ritual and ceremonial) in the political construction of a polity.
- 18 See Weithman, Paul J., "Theism, Law and Politics" in Quinn, Philip L. and Taliaferro, Charles (eds.), *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 490–91.
- 19 "Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes: our ancestors. It is a democracy of the dead." This quotation by G. K. Chesterton provides an interesting context for the broad correlation of Orthodoxy with the political ideology of conservatism. As it has been alluded to Orthodoxy's sacred point of reference is apolitical and transcendental. In consequence, when references are made to conservative political forms, they pertain to their traditional predisposition or respect for socially sanctioned norms of conduct. Orthodoxy, as the sacralisation of Serbianhood, involves a venerated, ancestral lineage that is nationally important and according to circumstances may be politically conservative. However, this "vote to the past" does not preclude the actualisation of other political forms. The preceding excerpt is quoted by Heywood, Andrew, *Political Ideologies*, p. 70.

- 20 Quoted by Horvat, Branko, *An Essay in Yugoslav Society* (White Plains, New York: International Arts and Sciences Press Inc., 1969), p. viii.
- 21 This particular point has been previously elaborated upon in the discussion of the *zadruga* and its social significations for *Homo Serbicus* in the third chapter.
- 22 In addition, the communist cause was furthered by the economic conditions of underdevelopment and dependency, experienced by the inter-war Yugoslav state, which eventually propagated the construction of a new federal, socialist republic after WW II. See Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, pp. 65–66.
- 23 The interaction of various religions, including Christianity, and communism is broadly alluded to in the concluding remarks of Stackhouse, Max L., "Politics and Religion", pp. 421–22.
- 24 The universal appeal of communism, theoretically, contradicts the economic pre-conditions of capitalist development, upon which the Marxist vision of a proletarian revolution had evolved. [See Marx, Karl, *The Communist Manifesto*, in Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969)]. For the purposes of this analysis, the universal appeal of communism refers to its empirical application in numerous countries irrespective of the depth or scope of their economic complexity.
- 25 The idea of Yugoslavism was developed in the nineteenth century around the notion of unification of the South Slavs. Different intellectual interpretations on the subject persisted and were attributed to the historical experiences of the constitutive nations. For the Serb peoples, Yugoslavism involved the inclusion—administratively—of Serbian provinces and possibly, of Bulgaria (before 1878) in a single state—entity. See Banac, Ivo, *The National Question in Yugoslavia*, pp. 108–11; Cohen, Lenard J., *Broken Bonds: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia*, p. 4; and Jelenic, Dj., *Nova Srbija i Jugoslavija: Istorija nacionalnog oslobođenja i ujedinjenja Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca* (Belgrade: Drzavna Stamparija, 1923), pp. 249–78 and 378–472.
- 26 Quoted by Babeuf, G. in "Manifesto of the Equals" in Arblaster, A. and Lukes, S. (eds.), *The Good Society*, translated by S. Lukes (London: Methuen, 1971), p. 79.
- 27 See Koestler, Arthur, *The Yogi and the Commissar* (New York: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1946).
- 28 See Seton-Watson, Hugh, "Thirty Years After" in McCauley, Martin (ed.), *Communist Power in Europe 1944–1949* (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1977), pp. 220–30.
- 29 See Rigby, T. H. (ed.), *Stalin* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1966), pp. 30–35.
- 30 Yugoslav ambitions on Albania, the idea of a Balkan federation with Bulgaria and the armed conflict in Greece, where pro-communist partisans counted on Yugoslav support, rendered the entire Balkan peninsula an object of Yugoslav–Soviet contention. In this context, the important organisational and personal ties—that antedated ideological convergence—between Zhdanov and Tito were perceived as an involvement in the Soviet domestic affairs and contributed to the 1948 outcome. See Barker, Elisabeth, "Yugoslav Policy Towards Greece, 1947–9" in Baerentzen, Lars, Iatrides, John and Smith, Ole (eds.),

Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War: 1945–49 (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 1987), pp. 263–95; Banac, Ivo, *With Stalin against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 45–116.

- 31 See Claudin, Fernando, *The Communist Movement: from Comintern to Cominform* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1975), pp. 312–16.
- 32 The foregoing developmental stages (not in their strict chronological order) reflect the pursuance of inter-ethnic equality and socialist equilibrium in Yugoslavia. For a synoptic appraisal on the subject, see Cohen, Lenard J., *Broken Bonds*, pp. 26–38.
- 33 See Schöpflin, George, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe*, pp. 208–10.
- 34 The atomisation of the communist society was an instrumental party policy, aimed at the fragmentation of collective–societal–action that could undermine its monopoly of power. (See Schöpflin, George, *Politics in Eastern Europe*, p. 169). The Yugoslav regime had acted on the same principle, when the secular collectivity was undermined by ethnically induced demands, as for instance, in the Croatian Spring in 1971–72.
- 35 See Schöpflin, George, *Nations, Identity, Power*, p. 209.
- 36 See Chadwick, Owen, *The Christian Church in the Cold War*, The Penguin history of the Church No. 7 (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1993), p. 22.
- 37 See Schöpflin, George, *Nations, Identity, Power*, pp. 209–10.
- 38 The relation of the communist state with ecclesiastical institutions has been investigated to a considerable depth by various authors. Their conclusions on the subject are variable and focus upon the interaction of monopolistic power bases, organised as concrete “secular monopolies of the left” (communism) or spiritual interest groups, co-opted Churches and suppressed congregations. See Martin, David, *A General Theory of Secularisation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), p. 47; Pankhurst, Jerry G., “A Comparative Perspective on Religion and Regime in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union” in Hadden, Jeffrey K. and Shupe, Anson (eds.), *Prophetic Religions and Politics: Religion and the Political Order*, Vol. I (New York: Paragon House, 1986), pp. 272–306; Michel, Patrick, *Politics and Religion in Eastern Europe*, translated by Alan Braley (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991); Swatos Jr., William H. (ed.), *Politics and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe: Traditions and Transitions* (Westport: Praeger, 1994); Ramet, Pedro, *Cross and Commissar: The Politics of Religion in Eastern Europe and the USSR* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).
- 39 Communist efforts to curtail the societal appeal of Serbian Orthodoxy were concentrated on her public stigmatisation for alleged collaboration with the Chetniks; the appropriation of ecclesiastical property; and more importantly, the support of national autocephalies for the Montenegrin and Macedonian congregations, which physically fragmented the Serbian geography of faith. See Ramet, Sabrina P., *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 3–49.

- 40 Aleksandar Rankovic was a highly ranked Serbian communist who served as the Minister of the Interior and as the Yugoslav vice-president. In his political capacity, he strongly opposed the decentralisation of the Yugoslav state, a belief that eventually terminated his political career in 1966. While his strictly nationalist intentions remain debatable, his political support of administrative centralisation is closely correlated with the broader perceptions of the Serbian political culture. See Judah, Tim, *The Serbs*, pp. 143–45.
- 41 Through discussions with a number of Serbs on the societal prominence of Yugoslav communism over Orthodoxy, their responses were rather variable. A minority supported the view that communism, indeed, constituted a form of secular pragmatism which surmounted religious beliefs. In the majority, the discussants were categorical and defined communism as an ephemeral or even artificial (*vestacki*) creation. While Orthodoxy remained the foundation of the Serbian being, it is my personal view that Yugoslav communism is currently subjected to retrospective feelings of regret (following the events of the past decade).
- 42 The preceding evaluation of the communist order and the ensuing precepts of legitimization are broadly based on Rousseau's formulations on the subject of political legitimacy, in particular, his observation that "social order is a sacred right that serves as the basis for all others. However, this right does not come from nature; it is therefore based on convention". Quoted by Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *On the Social Contract*, edited and translated by J. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), pp. 46–47.
- 43 See West, Richard, *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*, (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1996), pp. 24–45.
- 44 This Weberian perception of charismatic, political leadership (defined upon religious references) is quoted by Blondel, Jean, *Comparative Government: An Introduction* (New York: Philip Allan, 1990), p. 279.
- 45 See Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, pp. 236–41.
- 46 It should be emphasised that communist evaluations of the Serbian identity and its implications were confused by Marxist-Leninist ideology that regarded identity an epiphenomenon; Comintern policy; the role of precani Serbs in the Partisan movement; peasant radicalism; and sympathy for Russia.
- 47 See Djilas, Milovan, "Novi tok istorije" in *Socijalizam*, Volume 33, Nos. 1–4, 1990.
- 48 *Ibid.*
- 49 See Pavlowitch, Stevan K., *Tito, Yugoslavia's Great Dictator: A Reassessment* (London: C. Hurst & Company Ltd., 1992), pp. 98–102.
- 50 Similar expressions of dissatisfaction and unequal treatment surfaced after the adoption of the 1974 constitution that decentralised and devolved power to the federative republics and autonomous provinces of Yugoslavia.
- 51 In fact, the second part of the charges contradicted the actual progression of events in which the Italian forces tried to protect the Serbian population from prosecution. An interesting account of the trial of Archbishop Stepinac is provided by Alexander, Stella in *Church and State in Yugoslavia Since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 95–120. His biography is

elaborated by Benigar, Aleksa O., *Alojzije Stepinac: Hrvatski Kardinal* (Rome: Ziral-Zajednica Izdanja Ranjeni LaBud, 1974); and Cvitkovic, Ivan, *Ko je Alojzije Stepinac?* (Sarajevo: Izdavacka Djelatnost, 1986).

- 52 Archbishop Stepinac was sentenced to sixteen years of hard labour but was released from prison after serving only a shorter term of five years. The circumstances of his imprisonment and later of his death contributed to an enduring appeal among the Croatian people, a social fact that was noticed (and not appreciated) by the Serbian population. See West, Richard, *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*, p. 213.
- 53 See Halpern, Joel M. and Halpern-Kerewsky, Barbara, *A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective*, pp. 131–33.
- 54 See West, Richard, *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*, p. 294.
- 55 This particular view was expressed by an Orthodox priest during the course of an interview. See Hedges, Chris, “An ‘Us vs. Them’ Mantra Raises the Balkan Fever” in *New York Times*, 11 January 1997, A4.
- 56 A cinematic resurrection of Tito took place in 1994 as a part of a film project by Zelimir Zilnik (*Tito: For the Second Time among the Serbs*) that aimed to approximate (in a humorous manner) the public reaction and feelings toward the communist leader. The project involved an actor who dressed up like Tito and wandered in the streets of Belgrade while interacting with the public. Among the various responses, the Serbian people expressed a rather positive predisposition (even appreciation) for Tito. See Judah, Tim, *The Serbs*, pp. 135–36.
- 57 See Tomasic, Dinko, *Personality and Culture in Eastern European Politic* (New York: George W. Stewart, Publisher Inc., 1948), pp. 206–9.
- 58 See Dragnich, Alex N., *The Development of Parliamentary Government in Serbia*, East European Monographs, No. XLIV (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1978), pp. 1–9.
- 59 Quoted by Andric, Ivo, *The Bridge on the Drina*, translated from the Serbo-Croat by Lovett F. Edwards [New York: The New American Library (published as a Signet Book by arrangement with Macmillan), 1960], p. 329.
- 60 According to Ivo Banac, the princely form of the Serbian leadership was contextually bound to the circumstances of the 1804 and 1815 insurrections and to the Ottoman influences of institutional and political organisation. See Banac, Ivo, *The National Question in Yugoslavia*, p. 142.
- 61 See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans Since 1453*, pp. 230–68; Corovic, Vladimir, *Istorija Srba, passim*; Stanojevic, St., *Istorija srpskog naroda*, pp. 263–95; and Jelenic, Djurdje, *Nova Srbija i Jugoslavija, passim*.
- 62 See Dragnich, Alex N., *The Development of Parliamentary Government in Serbia, passim*.
- 63 The characterisation *perceived* pertains to the dichotomy between the actual territorial jurisdiction of the Serbian state and the notional interpretation of the Orthodox geography of faith which incorporates the Krajina region (the Krka monastery), Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbian-populated parts of Bosnia.
- 64 See Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, p. 378.
- 65 This passage formed a part of the final statement of Draza Mihailovic, the

- Serbian leader of the Chetnik movement, during his trial in 1946. The excerpt is cited in Tomasevich, Jozo, *The Chetniks: War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), p. 471.
- 66 The Chetnik military ranks comprised of peasants from rich families, older and married men. See Dedijer, Vladimir, *Tito Speaks: His Self-Portrait and Struggle with Stalin* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953), p. 149. Unlike the Partisan forces, women were prohibited from participating in the armed conflict, a decision, which originated in their socially prescribed position. See Tomasevich, Jozo, *The Chetniks: War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945*, p. 188.
 - 67 The Chetniks appeared to apply the Clausewitz(ian) observation that "war is the continuation of politics by other means". See Howard, Michael, *Clausewitz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), *passim*.
 - 68 See "Instructions pour le nettoyage: Draza Mihailovic, 1941–1943" in *Le nettoyage ethnique: Documents historiques sur une idéologie serbe*, translated, edited and commented by Mirko Grmek, Marc Gjidara and Neven Simac (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1993), pp. 212–24.
 - 69 See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 773.
 - 70 This idea originated from a slogan which at the time professed "one country, two masters" (*jedna zemlja a dva gospodara*). See Glenny, Misha, *The Balkans, 1804–1999*, p. 488.
 - 71 The Chetnik movement was organised on a local level in different parts of the country. In terms of its supervision, the movement remained fragmented with factions pursuing the Chetnik cause independently in Dalmatia, Bosnia and Montenegro. See Tomasevich, Jozo, *The Chetniks: War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945*, pp. 166–95.
 - 72 In fact, some Chetniks collaborated with the Italians, the Germans and even the Ustasha in 1943 in the pursuit of their anti-communist campaign. These political alliances, or rather compromise, were deemed "necessary" by the circumstances and priorities of the war effort. Consequently, the term Chetnik has assumed a pejorative connotation for a "collaborator".
 - 73 According to certain estimates, approximately three-quarters of the Serbian clergy supported the Chetnik cause. In certain instances, Orthodox priests became respected commanders within the military ranks of the movement (the Reverends Momcilo Djujic and Savo Bozic). See Tomasevich, Jozo, *The Chetniks: War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945*, pp. 176–77.
 - 74 The preceding excerpt is part of an argument on the political importance of populism as a response to social concerns of failure and exclusion. Within the thematical context of the current analysis, the policies of Slobodan Milosevic are viewed as essentially populist. Reciprocally, this quotation is justifiable by the means and pretext of his accession to power. Quoted by Wieworka, Michel, *La démocratie à l'épreuve: Nationalisme, populisme, ethnicité* (Paris: La Découverte, 1993), p. 92.
 - 75 Milosevic formally assumed the leadership of the Serbian Communist Party at the 8th Session of the Central Committee in September 1987. His intervention on behalf of the Kosovo Serbs in April 1987 enabled him to politically exploit

pre-existing grievances for his political purposes. See Thomas, Robert, *Serbia under Milosevic: Politics in the 1990s* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999), pp. 44–51. While Milosevic remained an obscure and rather *colourless* aparatchik brought to political prominence by his country's internal circumstances, he institutionalised a negative social–political cycle within which increasingly insignificant problems were resolved, while more profound ones were procuded and perpetuated.

- 76 Quoted by Cohen, Lenard J., *Broken Bonds: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia*, p. 52.
- 77 The Serbian Church warned that “Ustasha ideology was being resurrected in Bosnia and that the Serbs would have to remain united in their support for those who protect [them]” and their national and confessional principles. See *Pravoslavlje*, No. 558, 15 June 1990; No. 559, 1 July 1990.
- 78 See Ramet, Sabrina P., *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia*, p. 173.
- 79 Radmila Radic poses an interesting question as to “whether the Serbian Orthodox Church’s mission in this world consists of being a Christian or a national church, and whether a path based on the national option leads to the heresy known as philetism (an over emphasis on national identity over the unity of the faith)”. (See Radic, Radmila, “The Church and the Serbian Question” in Popov, Nebojsa (ed.), *The Road to War in Serbia: Trauma and Catharsis*, pp. 272–73). A synoptic answer would allude to the fusion of the national project with the institution of the Church, which circumscribed the role of the latter and introduced a political dependency on administrative and economic matters. As already suggested, the Serbian Church is a hierarchical organisation and her institutional thinking often expresses the perceptions of her representatives. Indeed, the Church constitutes the most significant societal and organisational expression of the Orthodox experience. However, Orthodox spirituality and metaphysical references could not be lessened to the pursuit of political claims, national and personal, which often propagate and advance individual causes (including Patriarchal ambitions) and not those of the congregation.
- 80 Georg Büchner, *Danton’s Death*.
- 81 Quoted by Blondel, Jean, *Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, p. 114.
- 82 The wealth of individual variables on the interpretation and experience of the sacred could not attribute to Serbian Orthodoxy the categorisation of “a political party at prayer”. This particular characterisation paraphrases an observation, which views the “Church of England as the Tory party at prayer”. See Hancock, M. D. et al., *Politics in Western Europe*, second edition (London: Chatham House Publishers Inc., 1998), p. 71.
- 83 The Serbian Patriarch Pavle, in his response to Albanian students in Kosovo and their demonstrations in December 1997, distinguished between ephemeral and eternal notions of the “country”. See Patriarch Pavle, “Drzava nije isto sto i njen rezimi” (The “country” is not synonymous with her regimes), in *NIN*, 8 January 1998, pp. 14–15.
- 84 Quoted by Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities*, p. 6.

- 85 This mechanistic-causal representation of power relations may seem rather simplistic, however, it is justified within the broader Orthodox cosmology and her prescribed juxtaposition of the human "creature" before the "Creator".
- 86 The concept of force differentials refers to "what happens when a first causal agent pushes one way (force) and a second causal agent pushes another way (resistance). The stronger force is... the more powerful agent." Quoted by McFarland, A. S., *Power and Leadership in Pluralist Systems* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 11. In the Serbian historical context, power is tautological with the religious (ecclesiastical) and state structures (first causal agent) that circumscribe the societal (the second causal agent) scope for resistance.
- 87 The cumulated impact of these historical experiences also accounts for the étatist traditions of Eastern Europe and the circumscribed spheres of social (civic) autonomy. See Schöpflin, George, *Politics in Eastern Europe*, pp. 10–16.
- 88 Quoted by Arendt, Hannah, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1970), p. 52.
- 89 Quoted by Linz, Juan and Stepan, Alfred, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation—Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 52.
- 90 See Gordy, Eric D., *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1999), pp. 21–101.
- 91 See "Modernisation as an Ideological Dilemma in South-Eastern Europe: from National Revival to Liberal Reconstruction" in Kitromilides, Paschalis M., *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy: Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-Eastern Europe* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), pp. 75–81.
- 92 This excerpt by Heinz Kohut on the interpretation of social proclivities for messianic leaders is cited in Schoenfeld, C. G., "Psychoanalytic Dimensions of the West's Involvement in the Third Balkan War" in Mestrovic, Stjepan G. (ed.), *Genocide after Emotion: The Postemotional Balkan War* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 159.
- 93 Quoted by Kohut, Heinz, *The Analysis of the Self: A Systematic Approach to the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorders*, Monograph Series of the Psychoanalytic Study of the Child No. 4 (New York: International Universities Press Inc., 1983), p. 26.
- 94 Marquis De Sade, through the behavioural description of two sisters, Justine and Juliette, provided a rather interesting account of the interaction between tradition and progress. Justine was a child of her time who deified progress and despised any contradictory (ancestral) manifestations and experiences. In comparison, Juliette was attached to the conventional traditions of the past and was incapable to understand the contemporary meaning and necessities of her time. Their different existential interpretations demonstrate that without due consideration of the other, progress and tradition could be transformed into parochial experiences of negation. This fable is incorporated in the work of Chronis, N., "Η Διαλεκτική Σχέση Παραδόσεως και Προόδου", in *Παραδοση & Προοδος στην Ορθοδοξία*, International Centre of Phi-

- losophy and Interdisciplinary Research (Athens: Ελληνικά Γραμματα, 1994), pp. 15–21.
- 95 Patriarch Pavle expressed this particular prescription of the ecclesiastical role (involvement) in the Serbian polity in view of the political developments in his country. See *NIN*, 4 January 2001, pp. 16–18.
 - 96 These specific assessments were offered in response to a question that asked the public to provide (psychological) association(s) for the word “democracy”. Quoted by Biro, Miklos, *Psihologija postcommunisma* (Belgrade: Beogradski Krug, 1994), p. 82.
 - 97 Of course, this particular clarification alludes to the imposed and incomplete nature of the communist project that failed to establish universally acceptable and permanent civic antipodes for the prominence of religious affinities.
 - 98 See Pamboukis, Yorgos, *Στην Τροχία του ενός Θεού: Αποπειρά προσεργίσης των πραγματικών γεγονότων στις μονοθεϊστικές θρησκείες*, pp. 666–74.
 - 99 The connection of Orthodox spirituality with the Serbian political structures is empirically manifested in the uniform approach adopted by most leaders and prominent social figures to her circumscribed, affirmative content—a trend that was interrupted by the solemn occasion of President Kustunica’s inaugural ceremony. The prescribed conditions of heteronomy permeate the Serbian life and popular culture—in circumstances of societal crisis—creating a pretext for collective—Orthodox-bound—action. See Colovic, Ivan, *Politika symbola: Ogledi o politickoj antropologiji* (Belgrade: Radio B92, 1997), pp. 121–24; Negrisorac, Ivan, “Srpsko pesnistvo i pitanje opstanka” in *Letopis Matice Srpske*, (October 1992); Stanisavljevic, Miodrag, *Golicanje oklopnika* (Zrenjanin: Gradjanska Citaonica, Banat, 1994), pp. 56–60; Tepavac, Mirko, *Demokratija ili despotija* (Zrenjanin: Gradjanska Citaonica, Banat, 1994); Popov, Nebojsa, *Republikanac* (Zrenjanin: Gradjanska Citaonica, Banat, 1994); *Sastalice: Hronika ideoloske konjunktore (1991–1994)* (Zrenjanin: Gradjanska Citaonica, Banat, 1994).
 - 100 See Marty, Martin E. and Appleby, Scott R. (eds.), *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economies, and Militance*, The fundamentalist project, Vol. 3 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 28–49, 68–87, 88–151.
 - 101 See Mayer, Arno, *Why Did the Heavens not Darken? The “Final Solution” in History* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), p. 44.
 - 102 See McGuire, Meredith B., *Religion: the Social Context*, fourth edition, pp. 147–52.
 - 103 Generalised ends (values), rules of conduct (norms), mobilisation, and the knowledge–predictability of the environment (cognition) are the constitutive components for societal action and collective behaviour. See Smelser, Neil J., *Theory of Collective Behaviour* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 23–46.
 - 104 Quoted by *NIN*, 4 January 2001, p. 16.
 - 105 The proceeding excerpt by Elias Canetti illustrates the social importance of density, which would also be applicable for the Serbian community. “The more fiercely people press together the more certain they feel that they do not fear

each other. The reversal of the fear of being touched belongs to the nature of the crowd. The feeling of relief is most striking where the density of the crowd is greatest." See Canetti, Elias, *Crowds and Power* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 16.

- 106 Jovan Skerlic's political observation in 1906 is cited in Stojanovic, Dubravka, "The Traumatic Circle of the Serbian Opposition" in Popov, Nebojsa (ed.), *The Road to War in Serbia*, p. 449.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PURSUIT OF “SACRIFICIAL” SALVATION THE KOSOVO MYTH IN THE SERBIAN COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

Synopsis: *The purpose of this chapter is to elucidate the mythopoeic (imagined) and sacrificial content of Serbianhood, which is encapsulated in the historical narration, performative re-enactment and moral claims of the Kosovo myth. Upon the recollection of a glorified military “defeat” in 1389, the Serbian community formulates concrete evaluative precepts, notional discourses of selfhood and spatial-temporal references, which explicitly delineate the ideological commitment, cultural idiosyncrasies, and ensuing practices of the nation. Contradictions and inconsistencies between historical and enacted time are overcome through the sacralised vision of the Kosovo “myth” that influences, with sufficient potency, the Serbian soul, the course of its existence and its ordering principles. The transcendent and emotive significance of Kosovo has stability, power of transmission, permanence and vivifying presence, which is not confined to an appeal to credulity but rather punctuates the Serbian construction of reality.*

This analysis initially approaches the Kosovo fable on a conceptual level, in which the process of mythopoeic construction is reviewed. The original, epic act of the battle and the poetic depiction of suffering, loss, loyalty and heroism are then juxtaposed with the Crucifixion of Christ, as a referent of the ultimate (sacred) sacrifice, which could be fathomed with human means. The ensuing notions of territoriality, historicity and truth are located in the Serbian communal memory, and conclusions are drawn on the existential binary (choice) of profane or “eternal” salvation that Homo Serbicus is historically and culturally predisposed to pursue.

National Myth(s) and Mythogenesis

An allegorical exegesis
of an earlier age and its “reality”

When applied to explicit or implicit (cognitive) statements about the “placement” of man in his environment, human rational faculties are often inadequate in the decipherment and revelation of an esoteric content. Humanity’s integrative roots with the universe and the creation of a graspable consciousness, as a means of orientation in time and/or space (in the concrete, but also in the dimension of ontological reality) embrace the totality of the past with the help of symbols, rituals, ceremonies and myths. A community could not regard itself as truly constituted until a sacred beginning is ascribed to it and an inseparable, “invisible society” (a mythical heritage) of moralistic–social character reaffirms and explains its founding and collective reality to new generations. Narratives, speculations, tales and interpretations concretise a distant ancient–nebulous condition of belonging, which objectifies cumulated convictions with regard to sacred beliefs, the expression of emotions and common ancestry. Whether as fictitious accounts or eclectic depictions of truth, myths are more durable than other narratives or tales, as they contribute to the resolution of social conflicts through the “renewal of the past in the present”.¹ The symbolic mediation and organisation of social life hence anchor the character of inter-personal relations, outlining their durable structure(s) and sacralising functions. The quest for collective cohesion is therefore rendered manageable through a mythical framework, which “acts as a charter for the present-day social order; it supplies a retrospective pattern of moral values; sociological order; and magical belief, the function of which is to strengthen tradition and endow it with a greater value and prestige by tracing it back to a higher, better, more supernatural reality of initial events”.²

Mythopoeic, symbolic and mystical elements are prevalent in most human cultures, either in the recollection of pre-existing ideas, customs and institutions, or in the form of a monarchical genealogy, established through divine providence—to cite an obvious example. The commonly encountered³ narrative of the Cataclysm propagates—in a similar manner—a cyclical, cosmological perception, in which the reconstitution of humankind originates in the destruction of a degraded and sinful society. While such mythical references provide a fitting contour and a discursive context for social existence, their nature, insight, modality and etiological nature often

remain elusive and obscure. A question hence arises as to whether myths essentially pertain to an intended interpretation (falsified or accurate) of our memories, or they instead constitute a coherent historical record.

The mythopoeic power of conceptualisation and the variety of explored themes and subjects—religious, of rebirth and renewal, or kinship and territorial⁴—correlate to a definitional plurality, which attributes to a myth different characteristics, positive and negative, sacred or fictitious. Ivan Strenski observed that myths are abstract concepts of an academic origin, aspiring to validate unsubstantiated theories.⁵ This hostile attitude is typical of the "scientific" approach that everything, including evaluative notions, could be subjected to rigorous criticism. Contrary to this rather dismissive assessment, the importance or pervasiveness of myths is measured by their narrow exposition of historical sequences that construct, in a broad sense, a "cartography" of human and societal origins. In theocratic history, where divine actions were manifested through their impact on the worshipping community, mythical equations were chronologically vague paradigms and reflections, which provided a representation of ancestral beginning in the form of *theogony*⁶. Numerous mythical narratives appropriate the socialising and indoctrinating function of the sacred, as the latter unites the psychic and cognitive properties of a collectivity to a non-mundane and "objectified" referent. When applied to the "reality of the sacred", human rationality dissolves the metaphysical domain, which, on closer reflection, demands a unique spiritual approach. In addition to sacramental acts, a sacred content could also be deciphered through a parable or a mythical story that construes sanctified assumptions through an articulated statement⁷ on mankind and nature. In other words, a myth denotes a powerful narration of important, existential experiences and of social life in particular⁸ that explain, reinforce and support positive valorisations of what is personally and collectively considered relevant. It follows that myths are one of the many *loci* of cognitive significance, which are necessary in order to ground one's interpretation of external or internal realities, as opposed to an idiosyncratic appraisal of history.

The mythical corpus comprises of a primal, evocative narrative of a symbolic⁹ and metaphoric diction that epitomises the sequence and purpose of a "world order". Observable facts and non-empirical elements are combined in the formulation of presumptions and the elicitation of specific reactions to traditions or existential dilemmas. Ephemeral or recurrent circumstances (social-political or economic) are palliated through the integrative and common belief in a shared past. Institutional structures

(ecclesiastical and ancestral forms of kingship) are conveyed as significant political values and cultural systems of social standardisation. Religious frames of reference are evoked, a ritualistic and symbolic cluster of loyalty and commitment to the sacred is constructed and sacralised definitions of reality are established. In consequence, myths reflect the cultural conditions¹⁰ and specificities on which they are forged and influence the process of adaptation and consolidation through the creation of boundaries and delimited precepts of membership.¹¹ Myths provide an obvious reality of events, mixed together in graphic imagery, which extends beyond a pre-constituted, historical meaning—actually experienced and borne by individuals—found in the material, offered to societies by history. This juxtaposition of a mythical and a historical content becomes clearer, when Plato's¹² contrast of *logos* and *mythos* is considered, in which the former connotes to rational elements while the latter pertains to more expressive details.

Myth and history are “narratives, that is to say, arrangements of events into unified stories, which can then be recounted. But myth is a narrative of origin, taking place in primordial time, a time other than that of everyday reality; history is a narrative of recent events, extending progressively to include events that are further in the past but that are... situated in human time”.¹³ Through the mere awareness of a mythical past, collective assumptions are validated for being part of a primordial culture and of a general intellectual climate. The historical accuracy or actuality of affairs embedded in the mythical narrative are not strictly relevant, compared with the revelation of its content.¹⁴ Whether a myth elucidates the process of creation (human and inanimate)¹⁵ or rather focuses on a significant historical act (the battle of Kosovo), fragments of reality are traced in its wording, the symbolic connotations or the etiological essence. In fact, mythical narratives distil a segment of wisdom that provides a cause or explanation of something actual (as self-evident truth) on the conformity of which notions of selfhood and a way of life are premised. Myths subsequently connect humanity not to a transient relativity but to an enduring source of creative interpretation.

The integrative and expressive power of a myth—its stabilising function—is initially conferred through the use of language, in both the structural presentations (logic) of a message and the relation of the transmitted experience and the receptive (signified) audience.¹⁶ Discordance is relativised by emotional sublimation, originating in the social reality and symbolic language of the myth, which renders the mythopoeic core and its ramifications significant. As a principal—standardised form of communication,

languages are in a constant state of evolution and change. Yet in their symbolic articulation they acquire a different dimension by the evocation of memory, images or events and the individual access they afford to an imaginative perspective. Myths are "good stories",¹⁷ which do not ground their message in a presumption of historical factuality or apodicticity, but induce belief within their metaphoric and suggestive symbolisation which stems from the specific, mythopoeic use of language. When a language is shared¹⁸ among different communities, as in the case of the *stokavian* dialect that united—under one linguistic and scriptural medium—the Yugoslav peoples,¹⁹ cultural distinction is marked out by the symbolic connotations of mythical fables²⁰ (the Kosovo epic), or as already suggested, the ecclesiastical use of the language.

According to Paul Ricoeur,²¹ the synergetic relation of myths and symbols pertains to the development of the former into a historically determined, narrative form of the latter. Considering the *coincidentia oppositorum*,²² the coincidence of opposites in nature—as experienced in the incompatibles of chaos and order, evolution and dissolution—the correlation of myth and symbols is concretised in their integrative and synthesising function. Myths are integrative symbols which bring together observable phenomena and various constitutive elements in the shape of animate and inanimate objects that then become bearers of fundamental notions. The mythical tale evolves into an instrument of discursive thought and a regulator (auditor) of historical experience, captured implicitly and loosely in the coded meaning of objects and subjects. Lévi-Strauss²³ used the concept of *bricolage* in the analysis of the constitutive features and structure of a myth, whose message is conferred upon the different materials (geography, expressed emotions) available in its inception. From its symbolic-mythical core, references of social consciousness are created that direct the emotions and affections of a community into culturally sanctioned definitions of reality.²⁴ These notions and evaluative precepts are subsequently reproduced in other myths which cumulate and propagate the mythological²⁵ lineage of thought of a particular collectivity.

The societal indispensability and efficacy of myths, as channels of power and condensed cognitive forms, are perpetuated through rituals that ensure both the participants' relation to one another and in time and space.²⁶ In this context, the performative enactment of rituals produces a common social signifier and a sense of sameness, which absorbs and commits each member of the community into the kaleidoscopic variety of mythical memories. "Myth is neither a mere outgrowth of ritual nor simply the

spoken correlate of what is being done. Rather, myth is the ‘expression of a parallel aspect’ that in effect translates the very real and specific situation into an idealised and timeless model.”²⁷ The ritualistic logic of myths, captured in sacramental references and patterns of purgation or celebration²⁸ actualise and exemplify the meaning and power of human rites,²⁹ of virtue and excellence, the mimesis of which is considered important for the community’s cohesion. The spatial–temporal consistency and notional insulation of a distinctive group is maintained through the participation (ritual) or reiteration (myth) of shared convictions and non-negotiable truth claims.

Cultural adaptation, integration, loyalty, faith or moral wisdom are crystallised in a mythical backbone that constructs an existential motive and a fitting social contour. Collective memories, contained structures, organisations, observances, and language assimilate the diversity of empirical experiences in the recurrent reflection of the past. Archetypal heroic references and deeds are regenerated in the present, through the subjective use and perception of “time”, linear, cyclical or both. Mythical evocations of a creative and distant era sanctify and validate a collective identity (order) in the mitigated presentation of events, whose emotional anchorage is congruent with the repetitive nature and reconciliatory function of the myth. In particular, the invariable inclusion of the religious beliefs of sin and salvation, good and evil, redemption and sacrifice further legitimate the mythopoeic claim and its self-evident truth.

The sacrificial dilemma of metaphysical (heavenly–moral) and physical (earthly–military) salvation permeates the epic account of the Kosovo battle, elevating a historical incident into an experience of cataclysmic proportions and implications. These heroic or divine connections nurture the mythopoeic construct of Serbianhood and attribute to it a transcendent referent, in which the past is evaluated higher than the present.³⁰

The Kosovo Battle (1389)

A historical account

Sacredness, morality, destiny and sacrifice thematically delineate the mythopoeic depiction of the Kosovo battle, which is painted in the Serbian national consciousness as a pivotal, symbolic moment, in fact, the abrupt conclusion to their prosperous, sovereign, medieval kingdom in 1389. The mythical attributes surrounding the sequence and development of events have often obscured the historiographic reality and specificities of this

chronologically distant incident. The historical narrative identifies St. Vitus' Day (15 June 1389) as the date of the military encounter. Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic, ruler of the largest Serbian principality, Vuk Brankovic, who controlled most of Kosovo and Vlatko Vukovic, a Bosnian Duke, led the Serbian army to the battlefield.³¹ On the Ottoman side, Sultan Murat I commanded the invading forces along with his sons Bayezid and Jakub Celebi. One of the few certainties on the outcome of this culminating and intense conflict is that both rulers met their death on the battlefield. According to legend, Sultan Murat I perished (was assassinated) during or after the battle at the hands of a Serbian feudal lord,³² a wounded soldier or a deserter.³³ Prince Lazar was captured and later executed in retaliation for Murat's death. Additional information on the exact numbers and composition of their respective armies and final casualties remains contradictory. To complete the historical progression of events, Bayezid succeeded his father to the throne, while Stefan Lazarevic (Lazar's young son), under the tutelage of his mother Queen Milica,³⁴ accepted to pay tribute and fealty to the Ottomans in return for protection. However, the precise nature and scope of the Serbian military defeat—transmitted ever since in an atmosphere of affirmative apodicticity—could not be ascertained and there are reasons to believe that the outcome was inconclusive and probably closer to a "draw".³⁵

The subsequent construction of the mythical narrative focused upon the effective elicitation of emotions in the political, religious and educational spheres,³⁶ in preparation of societal and individual emancipation and identity formation. The more consistent-credible remnants of the historical account were disregarded in favour of a simplistically presented, moral tale of a virtuous struggle in an impressive geographical setting. The preceding conditions (internal and external) which led to the battle of 1389 were largely ignored under the particular impact and strain of conscious sacredness and symbolism. For instance, the administrative fragmentation, anarchy and decay of the Serbian Empire, following the death of Tsar Dusan in 1355, are excluded from the obstinate recollections of the Kosovo epic. It is interesting to note that the battle of Maritsa in 1371 where Serbian forces suffered considerable casualties at the hands of an inferior Ottoman army survived as a salient empirical observation and never evolved into a condensed account of mythic proportions. The uneven historical depiction of these important incidents, Kosovo and Maritsa, is indicative of the conveyed "credibility" and sense of "reality", which mythical interpretations tend to attribute to actual events. Arguably, the battle of Kosovo should be

reviewed in relation to that of Maritsa, as the consequences of the latter circumscribed the Serbian military capabilities and paved the way for the Ottoman consolidation in the Balkans.³⁷ During the intervening period (1371–89), the Turkish conquest advanced with the accession of Macedonia and a move to the north, culminating in the fall of the strategic Serb town of Nis in 1386. The administrative character and organisation of the Serbian peoples pertained thereafter to an arrangement of tribute-paying vassalage (of an ambivalent historical credibility³⁸), which Murat I forced upon Prince Lazar. The military campaign of 1389 aimed to both clarify and consolidate the geopolitical balance and circumstances in the region.

Among the variable accounts of the culminating conflict, a number of different interpretations persist with regard to the ethnic composition and the strategic coalitions forged prior to the Kosovo battle. Subject to historical disagreement and prejudice, the Serbian contingents were comprised of Bosnian, Albanian, Hungarian, Czech and other mercenary soldiers, possibly of Wallachian and Western European origin.³⁹ On the Ottoman side, Murat's army involved the participation of Bulgarians, Greeks and Albanians, who in previous instances and under the obligations of vassalage had ensured the fulfilment of the Turkish cause.⁴⁰ In spite of this combination and congregation of military might, as already suggested, the immediate outcome of the battle remained inconclusive. Under circumstances of delimited (vassal) autonomy, Serbian "statehood" continued for approximately seventy years. This historical factuality and/or Prince Stefan's support of the Ottoman forces in the battle of Nicopolis⁴¹ were omitted from the Kosovo fable, which commenced its evolution within a few years of the battle. The ensuing creation and promotion of the highly symbolic legend and political myth of Kosovo reiterate Friedrich's and Brezinski's assessment that "a myth is typically a tale concerned with past events, giving them a special meaning and significance for the present and thereby reinforcing the authority of those who are wielding power in a particular community".⁴²

The Legend of Kosovo

The poetic narration of a "primordial" past

Historical specificities, existential questions, political and national aspirations, the antinomy of life and death, divine providence and the struggle for faith canvassed the notional cluster of the Kosovo legend and of the

contained significations which were transmitted, in a manner conveying credibility, to generations of Serbian peoples. Owing to the activity of the Serbian Church and Queen Milica, Prince Lazar was sanctified in a religio-political act, which conferred a distinctive spiritual and fatalistic essence to the corollary cycles of ballads on Kosovo. The ecclesiastical proclamation of a new martyr secured the propagation and maturation of an important sacralised national relic (*zivo telo*, living body),⁴³ which in the narrative form effaced the temporal boundary between the "participants" and the audience. As the Serbian medieval deity depended primarily on the Church for social guidance, the immediacy of Lazar's veneration contributed to the creation of a continuous tradition, supported by the "physical" hypostasis of the *sanctorum reliquiae*. Ecclesiastical influences also permeated the retrospective appraisal of the Kosovo battle, which under the probable authorship of Patriarch Danilo III produced the heroic poem "Narration about Prince Lazar".⁴⁴ To the musical accompaniment of *gusle*, one-stringed Balkan instruments played with bows, the Kosovo epopoeia was preserved as the longest lasting memory of Serbianhood. Heroic deeds and Christian morality were fused and exalted in oral narratives composed in the *deseterac*, the traditional decasyllabic form⁴⁵ of the *guslar*—the singers of folk epics. Centred on historical and scriptural recollections of priests, a radiant memory emerged, which was, for centuries, disseminated among the masses from the story telling of illiterate singers.

The legend of Kosovo and the Kosovo ideal were eventually concretised in the vernacular Serbian language by Vuk Karadzic,⁴⁶ who transcribed these prodigious mnemonic (poetic) "devices" into an extensive six-volume collection of Serbian oral poetry, published between 1824 and 1833 under the title *Srpske narodne pjesme* (The songs of the Serbian people). Within the collected anthology of oral poetry, the songs that recounted the historical events before, during and immediately after the battle of Kosovo were among the most notable. Lyrical chronicles like *The fall of the Serbian Empire*, to cite an example, conceptualised the Orthodox Christian faith in a thematical motif of a "sacrificial" choice—presented to the slandered hero (Prince Lazar)—and in the "passage", through death, to eternal salvation and life.

*From that high town, holy Jerusalem,
there comes flying a grey bird, a falcon,
and in his beak a small bird, a swallow.
Yet this grey bird is not just a falcon;*

*it is our saint, the holy Saint Elijah.
And the swallow is not just a swallow,
but a message from the Holy Virgin.*

*The message falls in the lap of the Tsar;
for Tsar Lazar is the message destined:
“O Tsar Lazar, Prince of righteous lineage,
which of the two kingdoms will you embrace?
Would you rather choose a heavenly kingdom,
Or have instead an earthly kingdom here?*

*...If, instead, you choose the heavenly kingdom,
then you must build a church at Kosovo.
Do not build it upon a marble base,
but on pure silk and costly scarlet cloth,
and give your host orders to Holy Mass.
For every man, all soldiers, will perish,
and you, their prince will perish with your host.”*

*Lazar is vexed; he ponders, he thinks much:
“O my dear Lord, what shall I ever do?
And of the two, which kingdom should I choose?”*

*...Lazar chooses the promised heavenly kingdom;
he refuses the earthly kingdom here.⁴⁷*

Prince Lazar's existential dilemma and the “Orthodox” decision—in a religious, moral sense—to forsake his mundane hypostasis for the “Kingdom of heaven” conferred an instructive and enduring dimension to the mythical narrative. The apparent connotations of the heroic act with the “passion” of the Crucifixion of Christ preserved the associative and cognitive function of the myth and possibly suspended disbelief on the part of the audience and their contemporary descendants. These symbolic connections to a pre-ordained destiny were notionally and temporally layered in the poetic construction and the essential message (the valiant conduct and Orthodox devotion of Lazar) of the story. The consciousness of Lazar's martyrdom (*My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death*, Mark 14:34), his appeal for divine guidance (*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*, Mark 15:34) and his eternal salvation (*he was received up into heaven, and*

sat on the right hand of God, Mark 16:19) were obviously inspired from the passages of the New Testament.⁴⁸ Orthodoxy's thematical and stylistic influence exalted the human agent in the narrative and illustrated a "sacred" perception of conduct, on which social realities and attitudes were constructed culminating in the inception of a Serbian national being.

*Better a praiseworthy death
than a life in scorn.
Even if my face was ripped and the sword struck my head,
I suffered in a righteous cause...
...As I waited for death,
I thought of immortality.*⁴⁹

An act of personal abnegation (Lazar's sacrifice) evolved into a diachronic reference and an allegoric intermediary of the human-divine communion and the synergetic relationship (trust) with the omnipotent and omniscient Creator. Prodigious individual and social qualities were bestowed upon the adherence of the Orthodox faith,⁵⁰ patrimony, loyalty and the family. In order to survive as a whole, the Serbian peoples resorted to the emotive, observable and "measured" abilities of the mythical account on Kosovo.⁵¹ The exact character and human condition of the "actors", their real lives, sentiments and reactions were explored from a limited situational and psychological perspective. In a society where public identity, classificatory systems and organisational structures were associated exclusively with males, the female presence was lyrically justified—as already suggested—in the eulogy of the dead and sanctified (heroic) husband.

*Lazar, conqueror of invaders,
he, confessor of the Trinity,
...Lazar, the pillar of the Church,
...the salvation of the monks,
the enemy of demons.*⁵²

As the figure of the ruler embodied the community's cohesion and unity, the sacrificial act of Lazar's murder provided a primordial link with the cosmic-divine reality, an *axis mundi*, that guaranteed a permanent connection between the sacred and transcendent ground on which the nation had its origins and lived out its destiny. It is appropriate, providing Lazar's sanctified position in Orthodoxy, as a mediator and witness par

excellence of divine manifestation, that he should be the first to hear of the presence and revelation of a higher authority (*yet this grey bird is not just a falcon; it is our saint, the holy Saint Elijah*). In consequence, the internal, verbal logic of the myth, as a source and transmitter of memory “adjusted” to the language of the multitudes, relied heavily on the circumstances surrounding the death of the sacralised martyr. Pertinent cultural assumptions, the emotional anchorage and inner-substance originating in the Kosovo legend were reciprocal to the murder of Lazar, who, as it is obvious, is not an easily circumscribed human and symbolic “signifier”. As a sacred symbol (a human “totem”)⁵³ and an expression of collective unity and power, Prince Lazar, the provider and the guarantor whose presence squashed disorder, attained sainthood which depended on the nature of his suffering. There is a symbolism at work within his altruistic death and the “height” (sacredness) he then rose to, which were endowed with a surplus existence, expressed in the profane or sacred spheres, including everything in his proximity—relics, lineage and sacrifice. The notional motif of self-sacrifice pervaded the Serb historical consciousness, evolving into the instructive and cognitive (attitudes, judgements or beliefs) core⁵⁴ of the Kosovo fable.

O comrades and fellow soldiers, in order to praise Christ we assume the burdens of former soldiers who are now with Christ. We are one humanity, subject to the same passions. And a single grave will be ours.⁵⁵

It is the cultural placement of a historical incident in ultimate contexts that renders it, frequently at least, socially powerful and pronounced. Inherited ways of thinking, in relation to intentions, orientations and chain of significations subsequently assure the survival of the society considered. In a given and specific context, a shift of meaning, in which available symbols are invested with other connotations than their “real-rational” component occurs, which is inextricably interwoven with the actual ends and functional needs of a collective entity. To that end, the internal, imaginary “logic” of the Kosovo myth cultivated a “concocted” perspective (axis) of betrayal and disloyalty in response to the experience of the Serbian defeat. The poetic recital of daring, heroism, glory, bravery and honour—as concretised in the Kosovo epic—was juxtaposed with a distinctive possibility of treason that undermined, or rather, contributed to the final outcome of the battle. The suggestion of betrayal was raised in the Serbian chronicle of Pec (1402), where it was observed that “I do not know what to say in truth about this, whether he (Lazar) was betrayed by one of his own or whether

God's judgement was fulfilled in this".⁵⁶ The implied actuality of treason gained substance in the "liberal" distortion of historical evidence, which eventually adopted Vuk Brankovic as the "factual" and moral antipode to the exalted conduct of Lazar. The true identity and character of the designated villain were virtually erased from the collective memory, substituted with a contrived and an unfairly maligned appraisal of the original sequence of events. A constitutive variable that complemented the mythopoeic aura of Kosovo matured in the lyrical personification of disloyalty, in Vuk Brankovic.⁵⁷ Brankovic is essential to the narrative as the negative polarity to Lazar's positive impact. The polarity then serves to enroot the problem and dilemma of loyalty-treachery, as central to the Serbian self.

*The njevera is sitting by your knee,
And drinking cool wine before you:
O accursed Vuk Brankovic,
Tomorrow is beautiful St. Vitus' Day,
We shall see in the field of Kosovo,
Who the vjera⁵⁸ and the njevera is.⁵⁹*

A similar, notional depiction of military treachery is proffered in an excerpt from another Kosovo ballad, when Queen Milica is informed of Vuk Brankovic's "unfaithful" conduct on the battlefield.

*You asked also about the accursed Vuk Brankovic,
Accursed be the one who bore him!
Accursed be his family and lineage!
He betrayed the Tsar in the field of Kosovo,
And led away, my Lady,
Twelve thousand armoured cavalry!⁶⁰*

The human grief and anguish for the profound loss of lives and the impeding Ottoman occupation found their narrative antithesis in the celebration of Murat's I assassination. An archetype of heroism and self-sacrifice for the faith and glory of Serbia emerged in Milos Obilic (Kobilic/Kobilovic), a charismatic and faithful feudal warrior, whose loyalty to Lazar provoked the chivalrous feat of the execution of the Ottoman ruler. An ideal reference of a courageous, noble and principled historical figure, who dares to confront tyranny, would, in later years be distilled in the memory of the Serbian peoples. The glorification of a heroic act, spurred by the religious

and ideological antagonism toward Islam, was firmly rooted within the patriarchal structures of a society, in which Orthodox affinities were a powerful emotive force.

*Milos sprang up on light feet,
And bowed down to the black earth.
“...I never was a njevera,
Never was I, nor will I ever be,
But I intend tomorrow in the field of Kosovo,
To die for the Christian faith.”*⁶¹

Upon the successive syntheses and historical sedimentation of the Kosovo “central” imaginary,⁶² societal practices and aspirations were formulated that possessed an indivisible meaning and rendered the Serbian community visible to itself. In the course of time, Lazar’s cult and its contained symbolism were progressively localised in the monastery of Ravanica, where the commemoration of the sanctified martyr continued under the jurisdiction of the faithful monks.⁶³ To the extent that it presented itself as the “truth”, the attested incident of the Kosovo battle and the thematical permutations, layers and elements (the ultimate constituents) which pervaded the mythical tradition were culturally engendered in the cognitive capacity of the Serbian society. Bishop Atanasije Jevtic observed that the existential “choice” of Kosovo affected the historical evolution of the Serbian peoples, as it profoundly influenced, at crucial instances, the ethos and the consciousness of the community.⁶⁴ As a meaning that can be recognised in both the content and the spirit of a nation, the Kosovo legend, that is at once firm and flexible (embellished and improved by successive generations), conforms to the conditions and essential functions of social life. Once posited, the Kosovo ethic led to particular conclusions and consequences which survived for a long time. Visions and experiences of a concrete periodisation of history became synonymous with the loyalty-commitment to Serbianhood, measured not by political association or by state borders, but by religious affinities, culture and shared codes of communication. The virtues and praxis of national sovereignty and cultural communality, in which the control of symbols offered an enormous advantage in legitimating and mobilising power, were extolled in the nineteenth century.

The elements of holiness and the divine sanction, or rather the ecclesiastical patronage of the epic tradition, provided a moralistic and lucid

awareness which inspired the re-enactment of "lasting" political, military and spiritual references from the past.⁶⁵ It should come as no surprise therefore that the date of the Kosovo battle—15th of June or the 28th according to the Gregorian calendar—grew into the cult of St. Vitus' Day, in the late nineteenth century. In the process, the commemoration of the Old Testament prophet Amos, observed on the same day, prior to the celebration of Vidovdan,⁶⁶ gradually faded in the hesitant spirit of national regeneration. Under the circumstances of the Ottoman occupation, public celebrations of the historical battle were prohibited, but the distant memories of the heroes and martyrs involved were liturgically and symbolically preserved in local congregations,⁶⁷ in a reminiscent manner to the *isprijas*, who burned candles and carried incense in their honour.

The spiritual and "physical" awakening of the Serbian peoples revolved around the mythical references and historical foundations of oral poetry, as collected and recorded by Vuk Karadzic. An epic lineage of thought, romantic in form and sacrificial, courageous and heroic in character, pervaded the Serbian campaigns for unification and liberation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that aspired to finally "avenge" Kosovo.⁶⁸ In the "hands" of Petar Petrovic Njegos, the historical anathemas of defeat and perennial suffering were lyrically reconstructed into an ode to Orthodoxy and an oath to freedom, struggle against tyranny and national vigilance. His poem, *Mountain Wreath*, exerted an enormous influence on perceptions of foreign tyrants—the murder⁶⁹ of whom was popularly understood as a noble act—and would politically inspire the Serbian population in the pursuit of national assertion. The coincidence of opposites in the thematical juxtaposition of faith and treason, glory and damnation were echoed by the intense emotions of the audience that identified with Njego's message and the contained insinuation of liberation.

*O you, Milos, who does not envy you?
You are victim of your noble feelings,
you, a mighty military genius,
a terrific thunder that shatters crowns!*⁷⁰

Ilija Garasanin, a principal advocate and supporter of Serbian nationalism who also served as a minister of interior affairs (1844–52), outlined the territorial future of his country in the *Nacertanije* (Programme), a political document that incorporated Kosovo and its entailed significations, in his étatist vision of Serbia.⁷¹ The leitmotiv of his blueprint, centred on the

medieval heritage and grandeur of his Serbian ancestors and the Orthodox Church of Saint Sava. These sentiments of the Kosovo imaginary were transmuted from a solemn eulogy and a noteworthy sermon into a nucleus of “sameness” and a pronounced foundation of a national being. The intrinsic ritual logic of the myth hence underlined all cultural patterns of Serbian life, as a manifestation of a sacred experience, inseparable from the living “reality”. In consequence, the “memories” of Kosovo, fresh and vivid and full of images of a culture which had been tried, concretised the etiological cohesion and expressed “truths” of Serbianhood, through the evoked themes of death and rebirth, “chaos” and regenerative order and all subsequent meaningful activity. “Thus the gods did; thus men do.”⁷²

Kosovo: the “Continuous” Dialogue between the Present and the Past

Ernest Renan observed that “a nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one... One lies in the past, one in the present”.⁷³ The genealogical confluence of an ancestral temporal content—pertaining to the origins of all the entities, of individual and social life—with that of contemporary experiences articulates the constitutive boundaries and cultural foundations of a nation. In spite of historical instances of discontinuity—under conditions of foreign occupation—, national traditions are perpetuated through mythical narratives, which are transmitted in an aura of factuality, imbued with segments of reality. Upon the periodical return to paradigmatic situations, fables are produced by a particular society at a specific moment. Embraced with the contained convictions of positive and negative valorisations, the Serbian peoples shared the experience of Kosovo (as an expressible referent of an indigenous discourse) comprised of “physical”—soil, blood, family, home—and “spiritual”—psyche—margins. The dialectical relationship or rather the temporal proximity of past and present underlines the need for a continuous regeneration, revelation, inspiration or instruction by which truth, personal or collective, is declared. Societal uncertainty, political antagonisms and corrosive contestations⁷⁴ of innate symbols focus the Serb aspirations for objective prescriptions on the significations of Kosovo. Heroic or historical times are chronologically connected in their efficient mediation of a credible identity whose transcendent resonance or effulgence could neither be verified nor accessed, only by human agency.

In a limited and narrow sense, the concept of time—linear and cyclical—could potentially culminate into confusion for an observer who endeavours to decipher the nature of an essentially conflictive and cosmogonic incident like the battle of Kosovo. The mythical narrative elaborates on the “foundational” function of events—*in illo tempore*—and the evolution of Serbianhood in her present physical, moral and social condition. What is at stake is to relate our time to the “immemorial”, whether this be in the form of participation or mimesis, which is precisely the essential nature and purpose of the myth. Earthly realities or fragments of it, ethical references, political institutions and even the existence of man—exalted or fallen—are complemented and limited by the particular claims of the mythical reflections. The interest in the past is inseparable from an interest in the present and from expectations about the future, which is fuelled by the desire for knowledge of a community and people in time.

Yet as an experience of substance, perceptible and “lived”, the historical appraisals of Kosovo reflect a particular interpretation of the concept of time, corresponding to a specific, national and social mode of existence. Material realities, reputed and historical figures, hills and valleys are chosen to ascertain the inexorable route of an ancestral destiny. Hence, the cultural eminence of the Kosovo myth does not pertain to a mere elucidation of antecedent events. In fact, the national prominence of the legend originates in the teleological reconstruction of a collective vision of the past, which is indicative of the Serbian processes of nation-building.⁷⁵ Under the spiritual guidance of Serbian Orthodoxy, the *mysterion* of Kosovo is revealed and contemplated upon linear and cyclical notions of the temporal referent. The “cyclical” time is attributed to the ecclesiastical and liturgical celebration of the battle—*Vidovdan*—whereby the linear is a part of the human progression, toward the ultimate fulfilment of the resurrection. Elements of “sanctity” and a sense of transcendent morality and beliefs legitimate the implicit or explicit meanings of the Kosovo parable, which is conterminous with communal insights of Serbian reality.

In its national manifestation, the meaning of reality—as a state of things that are or appear to be real—is constructed and so are the culturally conferred judgements about selfhood, inclusion and exclusion.⁷⁶ Consistent patterns of cognition, conduct, perception, and practical (aggregate) attitudes in life are reciprocal with the creation and maintenance of a boundary that delineates the notional parameters of a national existence. However interesting, instructive or valuable toward the formation of an innate, ethnic consciousness, human reason alone is insufficient for the decipher-

ment of “truth”, confined in the experience of historical sequences of events—actual or mythical. The instrumental uncertainty of human reason in the knowledge of truth was commented upon by Michel de Montaigne, a judge in the case of Martin Guerre, when suggesting that “truth and falsehood have both alike countenances...we behold them with one same eye”.⁷⁷ The truistic nature of the Kosovo epic is posited in the juxtaposition of empirical conceptions (*vérités de fait*) and rational predicaments (*vérités de raison*),⁷⁸ within an emotive and spiritual context associated with the affirmation of the Serbian cosmology. An element of *this, here, then* and *now* could be deciphered from the foundation signifiers of the mythical narrative, which attributes a subjective and objective apodicticity to the contained references.

The effectuality of cultural dispositions on Kosovo primarily stems from the physical hypostasis—territoriality—of the myth that is graspable and invariably affirmed by individuals and society alike. The centrality of its “space”—an *axis mundi*—is internalised in the Serbian memory as the location where the diverse elements of the national being are in communication (union) with one another. The annual observance of the Kosovo battle and the entailed ceremonial activities revolve around the spatial visibility of the incident, which bestow to it an important identity. Hence, the spiritual congregation of Serbianhood in the Orthodox tradition of Kosovo forms a part of the process in which a collective ethos is achieved. Concealed or partly shrouded figures or evaluative precepts can then be retrieved through the use of the interpretive resources of “Kosovo” that have been refined and attuned in the cultural propensities of the Serbian tradition. The “truth” of Kosovo has a societal value only because it is deemed valuable for the spiritual survival of the Serbian nation in spite of historical evidence, political, or demographic convictions to the contrary. Identifying an “objective” cluster within a “subjective”, national existence (*l’imaginaire social*) allows for the reproduction of the constitutive and enduring elements of Serbianhood—honour, family, heroism, Orthodox faith and sacrifice.

“In every human problem it is difficult—and achieved only by a few—to distinguish the enduring (‘living’) content from the ‘mortal’. The ‘paths’ of life and death are intertwined and dark, and therefore require our undivided concentration and attention. In this, lies the ‘problem’ of tradition.”⁷⁹ George Seferis’ observation affords an interesting perspective for the appraisal of the temporal intersection of past and present within the notional discourse of Kosovo. Even if certain of the pervasive convictions—the di-

vine revelation—as to the reality of the metaphysical or unseen component in the myth are less convincing in modern times than they used to be, the lasting nature of the narrative pertains to its placement within the Serbian tradition. The “living” content of Serbianhood is springing from the historical progression of a community that has persisted over time, and in which the centrality of Kosovo is undoubted. Individual or universal predicaments and an internal logic are emitted from its mythical core, conferring cohesion under conditions of change and uncertainty. More importantly, for the Serbian peoples, the battle of Kosovo ultimately signifies the consummation of history and the moral victory of good over evil in a tradition that views its national past as “an eloquent proof of Christ’s resurrection and power”.⁸⁰

The Kosovo “Sacrifice”

“Which of the two kingdoms will you embrace?
would you rather choose a heavenly kingdom,
or have instead an earthly kingdom here?”

Sacrifice is a symbolic form of commitment that connotes an act of offering to a deity through the “surrender of something of value as a means of getting something more desirable or of preventing some evil”.⁸¹ With reference to the rites and beliefs of a specific system of religious worship, a sacrificial feat would involve a metaphoric or an actual presentation of acceptable objects, animate and inanimate, which “were set apart or consecrated and offered to a god or some other supernatural power”.⁸² Upon the consensual transference of a human possession to a divine recipient, a system of meaning—sacred or social—a sense of belonging—an identity—and evaluative precepts and priorities are reinforced, clarified and enhanced. A human act of offering is transformed into the narrower experience of sacrifice through the residual element of ritual—a prayer, representations, or simple gestures—that permeates the nature of the latter. On a social level, the mediation of sacrifice pronounces a shared conviction of a reconciliatory character, which ascribes the cohesion and strength of the collectivity to the communication between the sacred and the profane. The more articulated the divisions in a society in instances of value-threatening actions and competing orientations, the greater the significance attached to a sacrifice, the common function of which provides the unity beneath the diverse forms of existence.

Implied here is the view—which goes back to E. Durkheim—that the sacral world is simply a projection of a community. By acting out the relationship between the mundane and divine spheres, the qualities of the latter consolidate and maintain specific perceptions of reality, as these are culturally induced. “Gods are representations of communities, they are societies thought of ideally... Sacrifice is an act of abnegation by which the individual recognises society.”⁸³ It follows that a personal element of renunciation nourishes a sacred cause and redresses social structures and conditions that have been disturbed.⁸⁴ To delineate a collective or private priority, one of the most precious possessions of the individual—life itself—could be ultimately offered in an act of self-sacrifice⁸⁵ or martyrdom. As a foundation signifier of early Christianity martyrdom pertained to the persecution suffered in the adherence to the faith and the blood of Christ, upon which the congregation was founded. The sacrificial hypostatisation of the Crucifixion reconciled man and God, in an act that pervaded the human–divine communion. The human readiness or willingness for sacrifice is then simply a paradigmatic mimesis, a re-enactment of the primal martyrdom⁸⁶ of Christ.

In the battle of Kosovo the sacrificial content, which clarified a moral and cognitive cluster rendering the national cause inviolable and sacred, centred upon Prince Lazar’s suffering and death and the shedding of his blood, which became an essential part of the myth. The divine nature of his altruistic action resulted from the idea that the sacrificial offering of his life repeated the primordial passion of the Crucifixion. The latent purpose of Lazar’s death exemplified the ethical priorities of a hierarchical system of meaning, in which the *mysterion* of the Eucharist is perceived to be a propitiatory sacrifice, a rendering present of Christ’s death on the cross, offered on behalf of both the dead and the living. As a sacrificial rite, Lazar’s demise⁸⁷ on the battlefield connected the moral and religious aspects of daily life into a transcendent and immutable referent of benevolence and social virtue. His sanctified “petition” strengthened the relationship with the divine sphere and sacralised the territory of Kosovo as the notional altar of his martyrdom. Lazar, as a human offering, died for honour and dignity, which were tautological with the observance of Orthodox morality on family and communal matters. The sacrificial content of his death emphasised the connective relation of the physical and metaphysical hypostases of *Homo Serbicus*, as his profane substance passed from the mundane into the religious realm through consecration. Lazar ultimately perished for freedom—in the spiritual sense, attributed in the Orthodox faith—and for a collectively shared desire of self-rule.

In constantly drawing attention to Lazar's sacrificial choice, a Serbian cultural propensity—of an emotive and psychological value—has evolved, which socially engenders the anti-individualistic ethos of Orthodoxy. In other words, the human agent is allegorically asked to fulfil his potential within a communal context. The abandonment of possessions for a personal commitment to the national cause historically motivated the Serbian peoples in the wars for liberation and unification. Under the tutelage of populist-messianic figures, the sacrificial spirit of Lazar was incorporated into the recent, military campaigns in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. As a vehicle of historical revision, Lazar's relic is freighted with strong emotions of suffering, grief and victimisation, which rest on a substratum of popular belief, invariably manipulated for political purposes and sustained within a homology between the communities of the living and the dead.

The affect and potency of sacrificial salvation by which human sin is expiated and humankind is reconciled with the Divine Being, is notionally, ritually, or culturally articulated in a number of different societies. Moral parables, heavily laced with religious references are worshipped and adored through scriptural passages and mythopoeic narratives, like the Masada⁸⁸ myth, to cite an example. However, on an individual level, the experience and interpretation of a sacrificial symbolism is commensurate to the scope and depth of the personal attachment to religious and national causes. Approaches that confer a common "quality" and desire to the Serbian peoples in becoming a human material of oblation on divine and national grounds obscure individual agency, inevitably and abase their "subject" into a mere form of irrational or fatalistic existence. Since perceptions of social responsibility also originate from and are attributed to the specific circumstances of any given society, occurrences of national zealotry and fanaticism are common within a "distraught" Serbian polity. The personal or collective reiteration of ethnic priorities culminated into the creation of "incarnate" Lazar(s),⁸⁹ obedient citizens, passive and active dissidents, who all coexisted within the Serbian territory and beyond. While certain people are prepared to offer their life to the altar of Serbianhood, numerous others are willing to experience the earthly Kingdom. Yet, the ultimate reward of the afterlife should theoretically embrace all, regardless of self-sacrificial propensities.

The Kosovo "sacrifice" could be deciphered into a literary and romantic content and a purely historical incident, involving the loss of human life and the destruction of profane hypostases. Influenced by the nationalistic pathos and fervour of the nineteenth century, a long tradition of oral po-

etry on Kosovo was drafted in the project of the Serbian nation, the regeneration of which necessitated sacrifices and actions of abnegation.⁹⁰ In the light of an Orthodox stream of consciousness, an emphasis on renunciation and altruism led to a metaphorical use of the notion of “sacrifice” upon which a sense of commitment in the attainment of national goals was forged. Rigid self-discipline, loyalty and strict morality were essentially means for maintaining and improving the devotion to the Serbian cause—ethnic and spiritual. Even if the pluralism of a modern society took away some of the natural conviction, the normalcy or persuasiveness of the once authoritative myth, the certitude of the Kosovo sacrifice is sustained by emotional, contextual or circumstantial experiences. Whether a fanciful abstraction or a factual reality, the Kosovo story reinforces the drift of the human condition that can be described existentially or metaphysically. Ultimately, its significance lies in the awareness of the measure and the criterion of distinction between substantive qualities and extraneous and epidermic hypostases of life.

Conclusion

The present chapter assessed the mythopoeic and sacrificial content of Serbianhood, which is diachronically engendered in the historical narration, the performative enactment and the moralistic claims of the Kosovo fable. Captured within an epic lyrical tradition, the battle of Kosovo crystallised, at a time of important social-political change, into a functionalist and instructive perspective of the national being and the cultural inheritance of Serbia. Upon the antinomy of life and death and the coincidence of opposites, the trauma of defeat was allegorically transformed in an ethical victory that produced heroic archetypes (Prince Lazar and Milos Obilic) and villains from within (Vuk Brankovic) or external (Islam). A lineage of thought revolved around the “crucifixion” of the Serbian nation, sealed with the blood and lives of venerated individuals—“for the life of the flesh is in the blood... [and] it is the blood that makes atonement, by reason of the life that is in it”.⁹¹

The cultural permanence of the Kosovo myth is concretised in:

- the contained symbolic references to the Orthodox faith;
- the instructive nature of the narrative and the moral (sacrificial) “choice” presented to the audience;
- the Manichean and coherent interpretation of “good” and “evil”;

- the continuous evolution (poetic) of the parable; and
- the "physical"—territorial—hypostasis of the environment, where the mythical account unfolds.

In consequence, a particular notional discourse of commitment to the nation permeated the collective consciousness of successive Serbian generations and invariably conferred the political domain with an emotive and powerful instrument for popular mobilisation. The social pervasiveness of the Kosovo parable—very few, ethnic communities are completely ruled by a single, all-embracing myth—originates in its Orthodox emphasis of the unity of the metaphysical—physical spheres. Its cosmogonic character alludes to a paradigmatic existence—abruptly concluded—, the emulation of which holds great moral promise for the Serbian being. While the personal willingness to imitate Prince Lazar and Milos Obilic could be questioned under circumstances of pluralism (modernisation and urbanisation), the sacrificial dilemma of Kosovo continues to provide an important, existential dimension in the wider frontier of the Serbian society. The entailed violent content of the Kosovo sacrifice and its empirical manifestations are the focuses of the next chapter.

Notes

- 1 Quoted by Mann, Thomas, "Freud and the Future" in Murray, Henry A. (ed.), *Myth and Mythmaking* (New York: Braziller, 1960), p. 374.
- 2 This rather inclusive definition of myth was canvassed by Bronislaw Malinowski and is cited in Brennan, Timothy, "The National Longing for Form" in Bhabha, Homi K. (ed.), *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 45.
- 3 The Sumerian civilisation provided the first account of the myth of the Cataclysm, according to which at the end of the torrential rain, there was only one survivor. This myth is also encountered in most of the ancient world with the possible exception of Africa. See Pamboukis, Yorgos, *Στην Τροχία του ενοχ Θεου: Αποπειρά προσέγγισης των πραγματικών γεγονότων στις μονοθεϊστικές θρησκείες*, pp. 38–39.
- 4 See Schöpfung, George, "The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths" in Hosking, Geoffrey and Schöpfung, George (eds.), *Myths and Nationhood* (London: Hurst & Company, 1997), pp. 28–35.
- 5 See Strenski, Ivan, "Mircea Eliade" in *Four Theories of Myth in Twentieth Century History* (London: Macmillan, 1989), p. 2.
- 6 See Collingwood, R. G., *The Idea of History*, revised edition, edited with an introduction by Jan Van Der Dussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 14–17.

- 7 Kees W. Bolle defined myth "as an expression of the sacred in words... The language of myth does not induce discussion: it does not argue but presents". See Eliade, Mircea (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Religion*, Vol. 10 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 261–62.
- 8 See Kirk, G. C., *The Nature of Greek Myths* (New York: Penguin, 1974), pp. 28–29.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 See Bruner, Jerome S., "Myth and Identity" in Murray, Henry A., (ed.), *Myth and Mythmaking* (New York: Braziller, 1960), pp. 276–87.
- 11 See Schöpfung, George, "The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths", p. 22.
- 12 See Katsimani Kuriakou S., Roussou Evaggelou N., *Φιλοσοφία*, pp. 37–41.
- 13 Quoted by Ricoeur, Paul, "Myth and History" in Eliade, Mircea (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Religion*, Vol. 10 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), p. 273.
- 14 See Schöpfung, George, "The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths", pp. 19–20.
- 15 Mircea Eliade attributed a cosmogonic characteristic to every myth, as it is "always related to a 'creation', it tells how something came into existence, or how a pattern of behaviour, an institution, a manner of working were established; this is why myths constitute the paradigms for all significant human acts". See Eliade, Mircea, *Myth and Reality*, translated from the French by William R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1975), p. 18.
- 16 See Barthes, Roland, "Le mythe, aujourd'hui" in *Mythologies* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1957), p. 222.
- 17 See Kirk, G. C., *The Nature of Greek Myths*, pp. 28–29.
- 18 Dubravka Ugresic offers an interesting and personal account of the shared linguistic experience (fate) of the Yugoslav peoples. Her views on the subject are summated by her observation that "the language I write was called until recently Serbo-Croat (or Serbian and Croatian), and it was the language spoken by Croats, Serbs, Bosnians and Montenegrins. Today people are trying to force me to recognise Croatian as my mother-tongue, and Serbian and Bosnian as—foreign languages!" See Ugresic, Dubravka, *The Culture of Lies: Antipolitical Essays*, translated by Celia Hawkesworth (London: Phoenix House, 1998), p. 271.
- 19 See Banac, Ivo, *The National Question in Yugoslavia*, pp. 210–14.
- 20 Myths include an imaginary dimension that posits and provides a system of significations—to an audience—upon which social choices and functional ends could be comprehended. These imaginary references are neither a strictly rational development, nor a mere reflection of a historical continuum. Caught up in the constraints of the real and the rational, the imaginary content of the myth attempts to define social identities, its articulations, relations, desires or needs.
- 21 See Ricoeur, Paul, "The Symbol Gives Rise to Thought" in Capps, Walter H. (ed.), *Ways of Understanding Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 309–17.

- 22 For Mircea Eliade the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane is the most important of all, as it concurrently permeates cosmologies, lives and human communities. See Eliade, Mircea, *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 174.
- 23 See Lévi-Strauss, Claude, *La pensée sauvage* (Paris: Plon, 1962), p. 26.
- 24 The restoration of a collective consciousness and a sense of cultural cohesion are forged upon references to a Golden Age, *in illo tempore*, or what Mircea Eliade defined as *illud tempus* ("that time"). These "concrete" chronological experiences confer a purpose of inner and communal existence which could be actualised in the present. The *Masada* myth, the *Kalevala* or the conquests of Alexander the Great are obvious examples of a glorified past and destiny. See Smith, Anthony, "The 'Golden Age' and National Renewal" in Hosking, Geoffrey and Schöpflin, George (eds.), *Myths and Nationhood* (London: Hurst & Company, 1997), pp. 36–59.
- 25 See Mach, Zdzislaw, *Symbols, Conflict, and Identity: Essays in Political Anthropology* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 58–65.
- 26 See Schöpflin, George, "The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths", p. 21.
- 27 This correlation of myth and ritual is based on an interpretation of Theodore Gaster's study *Thespis*, which elaborates on the motif of divine (god) death and rebirth through patterns of renewal and revitalisation. Cited by Bell, Catherine, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, p. 7.
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 The revelation of important human rites (the ceremonies of ecclesiastical initiation, marriage, funerals, betrothal) and actions (fatherhood, childhood, pregnancy, birth) are considered as the functional essence of myths. See Eliade, Mircea, *Myth and Reality*, p. 8.
- 30 Pindar supported the view that a mythical narration always presented a past whose evaluative preponderance over the present was justified. See Kirk, G. C., *The Nature of Greek Myths*, pp. 101–103.
- 31 See Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1998), pp. 58–80; Stanojevic, St., *Istorija srpskoga naroda*, pp. 155–93; and Corovic, Vladimir, *Istorija srba*, pp. 256–62.
- 32 See Zirojevic, Olga, "Kosovo in the Collective Memory" in Popov, Nebojsa (ed.), *The Road to War in Serbia: Trauma and Catharsis*, p. 189.
- 33 See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans since 1453*, pp. 43–45.
- 34 See Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History*, p. 61.
- 35 See Cirkovic, Sima M., "O Kosovskom boju 1389" in *Zadusbine Kosova, spomenici i znamenja srpskog naroda* (Prizren, Belgrade and Ljubljana, 1987), p. 560. A military (technical) review of the outcome is provided by Noel Malcolm who attributes to the Ottoman side a (Pyrrhic) victory based on their final possession of the battlefield, the maintenance of relative order among the contingents—compared to their Serbian opponents—and their ensuing military capabilities in later years. See Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History*, p. 76.
- 36 There is a moral to be drawn from this. Consistent and objective history only becomes possible when the events have no mythic function, though the act of

historical analysis will import mythical qualities into the product through the mythic "word" of the historian and the corresponding assumptions that he/she begins with.

- 37 See Emmert, Thomas, A., *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo, 1389* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1990), pp. 25–26.
- 38 There are conflicting views with regard to the historical validity or absence of a concrete administrative relationship between the Ottomans and the Serbs, during the chronological period 1386–89. L. S. Stavrianos observes that in the aftermath of the Ottoman conquest of Nis in 1386, Prince Lazar became a vassal to Sultan Murat I as a part of a discernible Ottoman strategy of gradual expansion in the Balkans (See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans Since 1453*, p. 44). However, the historical validity of this observation is challenged by Noel Malcolm on the evidence of a military skirmish between the two forces which preceded the military encounter of 1386 (See Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History*, p. 61). A more elaborate account on the subject is provided by Reinert, S. W., "From Nis to Kosovo Polje: Reflections on Murad I's Final Years" in Zachariadou, E. (ed.), *The Ottoman Empire (1300–1389)* (Rethymnon, 1993), pp. 169–211.
- 39 See Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History*, pp. 62–65; Emmert, Thomas, A., *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo, 1389*, pp. 46–56.
- 40 See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans Since 1453*, p. 44.
- 41 *Ibid*, p. 45.
- 42 Quoted by Friedrich, C. J., and Brezinski, Z. L., *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961), p. 99.
- 43 The reliquary containing the relics of Prince Lazar was initially kept at the monastery of Ravanica (between Nis and Belgrade) which the late Serbian ruler founded. During the Serbian migrations of 1690 it was transferred to Vrdnik (later named Sremska Ravanica), where it remained until 1942, before it was taken to Belgrade. On St. Vitus' Day in 1988 the relics were finally returned to their original resting-place. See Rezdep, Jelka, "Razvitak kosovske legende" in Mihaljcic, Rade (ed.), *Boj na Kosovu, starija I novija saznanja* (Belgrade: Knizevnje Novine, 1992), pp. 527–88. The national (symbolic) and instrumental significance of Prince Lazar's relics is briefly discussed by Duijzings, Ger, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), p. 184.
- 44 See Holton, Milne and Mihailovich, Vasa D., *Serbian Poetry from the Beginnings to the Present* (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1988), p. 25.
- 45 See Mihaljcic, R., *Kosovska legenda i svest o srpskoj etnickoj posebnosti*, Istorijski glasnik, Nos. 1–2, 1984, pp. 39–46.
- 46 Vuk Karadzic was the principal advocate of the Serbian vernacular, whose efforts were instrumental in the standardisation (grammatical and scriptural) of the language. Under the guidance of Jernej Kopitar, a distinguished Slovene scholar, Karadzic's contribution was crucial in the literary, historical and national development of Serbia. It is noteworthy that his "radical" appraisal of the Serbian language elicited a hostile reaction from the Orthodox hierarchy

- who supported the use of the Slavo-Serbian (Russified) language and feared the prospect of a diminished (cognitive) loyalty to Russia.
- 47 These excerpts from the Kosovo ballad "The fall of the Serbian Empire" are quoted by Holton, Milne and Mihailovich, Vasa D., *Serbian Poetry from the Beginnings to the Present*, pp. 95–96. A different translation, which does not convey the original decasyllabic form, is provided by Pennington, Anne and Levi, Peter, *Marco the Prince: Serbo-Croat Heroic Songs* (London: Duckworth, 1984), p. 166.
 - 48 Olga Zirojevic in her analysis of the Kosovo legend and the entailed heroic content explicitly correlates Prince Lazar with Christ, as the destiny of the former "was depicted with astonishing precision" when compared to the historical sequence of the Crucifixion. See Zirojevic, Olga, "Kosovo in the Collective Memory", p. 191.
 - 49 This passage is from the heroic poem "Narration about Prince Lazar" and more precisely, forms a part of the confession of the dead ruler. Quoted by Holton, Milne and Mihailovich, Vasa D., *Serbian Poetry from the Beginnings to the Present*, p. 25.
 - 50 Considering the omnipresent-omniscient qualities of the Creator, His divine providence and wisdom, a question arises on the reasoning of a military defeat—like the Kosovo battle—inflicted upon an obedient (Serbian) congregation. The synoptic answer pertains to the freedom with which mankind participates in the human–divine communion and the actuality of evil and/or hardship as derivatives of the original sin. Misfortunes—natural disasters, illness and wars—caused by sources beyond the realm of human expectation are not suggestive of God's abandonment. As in the Kosovo parable, the moralistic and salvational content—entailed in suffering—provides a glimpse of hope and inspiration.
 - 51 Within the collective memory (narrative identity) of the Kosovo epic and the mythically construed sequence of events, a notion of self-understanding of invariable intensity or depth developed among the Serbian peoples, which enabled them to overcome as a single (cohesive) body the period of the Ottoman occupation. The ecclesiastical representations of Serbian statehood and culture were instrumental in the cultivation of the Kosovo tradition through the very act of transmitting a sanctified and immemorial event.
 - 52 Quoted by Holton, Milne and Mihailovich, Vasa D., *Serbian Poetry from the Beginnings to the Present*, p. 27.
 - 53 Radcliffe-Brown correlated the function of totemism (as experienced in primitive thought) with the development of social solidarities in terms of the internal unity among the members of a group and as the expression of their relationship with the entirety of the tribe. In the process he used Durkheim's terminology with regard to the conferred sense of dependence and in the creation of a mechanic and an organic solidarity within the community. (See Scharf, Betty R., *The Sociological Study of Religion*, pp. 53–58). To that end, Prince Lazar's characterisation as a human "totem", based upon his death in the battle of Kosovo, pertains to the symbolic ability to produce concrete perceptions of personal and collective conduct (schemes) out of the particular im-

age of his sacrifice. A logical parallel is postulated between the cause-effect relation of physical and metaphysical human hypostases, as mundane actions and choices have an impact on a spiritual and sacred (salvational) level.

- 54 The figure of Prince Lazar delineated—as a role model—the moral constitution of *Homo Serbicus*, instilling an innate respect for Orthodoxy, the family unit and the nation, while inspiring acts of altruism and abnegation. Importantly, his venerated existence concretised an archetypal referent of social expectations placed upon the Serbian men.
- 55 Prince Lazar's soldiers responded in this heroic and noble manner, which gradually became a cultural archetype of personal and communal conduct (abnegation) when asked firmly to fight for the causes of their Orthodox faith and country. These remarks were historically "preserved" through the recollections on the battle of Kosovo, of Patriarch Danilo III. See Corovic, V., "Siluan i Danilo II, srpski pisci XIV-XV veka" in *Glas srpske kraljevske akademije*, CXXXI (1929), p. 90.
- 56 Quoted by Stojanovic, Lj. (ed.), "Stari srpski hrisovulji, akti, biografije, letopisi, tipici, pomenici, zapisi, i drugi" in *Spomenik*, III (1890), p. 96.
- 57 Vuk Brankovic's conspiracy against Prince Lazar should be solely attributed to the mythopoeic development of the Kosovo narrative. Following on from the events of 1389, Brankovic maintained a limited autonomy over his principality and was finally imprisoned by the Ottomans and died in captivity. See Malcolm, Noel, *Kosovo: A Short History*, p. 67.
- 58 The term *vjera* denotes faith of a religious (Orthodox) character, and also a legal commitment and obligation to the feudal lord, the latter emanating from the patriarchal structures and organisation of the community. In contrast, the concept *njevera* was indicative of a treason of a primarily military nature, or, under specific circumstances, political deviance. See Taranovski, Teodor, *Istorija Srpskog Prava u Nemanjickoj Drzavi*, II, (Belgrade, 1931–1935), p. 112.
- 59 See Brkic, Jovan, *Moral Concepts in Traditional Serbian Epic Poetry*, pp. 118–20.
- 60 *Ibid*, p. 121.
- 61 On the eve of the Kosovo battle, Prince Lazar personally accused Milos Obilic of treason, which apparently prompted the latter to perform his heroic feat as a proof of his fidelity. According to the mythical epic, Obilic was singled out in a gathering of feudal lords that is historically presented in a manner highly reminiscent of the Last Supper. This excerpt forms a part of Obilic's response to Lazar, when the allegation of infidelity surfaced (*ibid*, p. 119). As a symbol of sacrifice and faithfulness, Milos Obilic was venerated (without the Orthodox ceremonial and ritual prescriptions) by the Serbian peoples, and his memory was iconographically captured with a nimbus of a saint in the monastery of Gabrovac. *Ibid*, p. 159, n. 22.
- 62 The concept of the social imaginary (*l'imaginaire social*) and its importance in the crystallisation of a symbolic and institutional content is elaborated by Cornelius Castoriadis in *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, *passim*.
- 63 See Mihaljcic, Rade, *Lazar Hrebreljanovic: Istorija, kult, predanje* (Belgrade, 1984), pp. 189–90.

- 64 See Jevtic, Atanasije, "Kosovsko opredeljenje za carstvo nebesko u istorijskoj sudbini srpskog naroda" in Episkop Pavle (ed.), *Sveti knez Lazar, Spomenica o sedmoj stogodisnjici kosovskog boja 1389–1989* (Belgrade: Sveti Arhijereski Sinod Srpske Crkve, 1989), p. 25.
- 65 The social preponderance and infallibility of divine, as opposed to human laws, whereby the former originate in an omnipotent referent, was observed by Sophocles, the Athenian dramatist and tragic poet, concerning Oedipus' violation of a prohibited activity (incest) "...The highest laws, born in the heavenly ether, Olympus alone is their father, they were never begotten by the mortal nature of men nor will they ever fade into forgetfulness; for in them lies a great god, who never grows old." Similarly, the sanctified nature of Kosovo (physical and spiritual) elevated a historical incident into a religious narrative, the divinity and finality of which nourished a consciousness that is ultimate and axiomatic. The passage from Oedipus Rex is cited by Castoriadis, C., *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, p. 389.
- 66 On the cult of St. Vitus' Day (Vidovdan), see Popovic, Miodrag, *Vidovdan i Casni Krst: Oglad iz knjizevne arheologije* (Belgrade: Slovo Ljubve, 1977).
- 67 See Zirojevic, Olga, "Kosovo in the Collective Memory", pp. 199–202.
- 68 See Emmert, Thomas A., "Kosovo: Development and Impact of a National Ethic" in Banac, Ivo et al. (eds.), *Nation and Ideology: Essays in Honour of Wayne S. Vucinich* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1981), pp. 61–86.
- 69 *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- 70 This excerpt from *Mountain Wreath* is cited in Holton, Milne and Mihailovich, Vasa D., *Serbian Poetry from the Beginnings to the Present*, p. 151. It should be noted that the poem particularly punctuated the emotions of the uneducated and rural Serbian peoples through its elegiac references to life, sacrifice and commitment.
- 71 For an analysis and an appreciation (of a subjective but useful character) of the historical role of the text, see Valentic, M., "Prva programska formulacija velikosrpske ideje" in Covic, B. et al., *Izvori velikosrpske agresije* (Zagreb: Skolska Kniga, 1991), pp. 41–77; Simunic, P., *Nacertanije, tajni spis Srpske nacionalne i vanjske politike* (Zagreb: Globus, 1992).
- 72 Mircea Eliade, citing the Taittiriya Brahmana in his book, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Or, Cosmos and History*, p. 21.
- 73 This passage is from Renan's lecture "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" delivered at the Sorbonne on 11th March 1882. Translated and annotated by Martin Thom and cited by Bhabha, Homi K. (ed.), *Nation and Narration*, p. 19.
- 74 The corrosive contestations of innate symbols (the Kosovo imaginary) refer to the progressive dichotomy between the "physical" and "spiritual" realities of the myth. In the actual province of Kosovo the demographic conditions do not lend themselves to the archetypal and idealised settlement–territorial and political–dictated by either the mythopoeic account or the nineteenth century nation–state. Kosovo, which was for centuries inhabited by a mixed population, occupies a major place in the national consciousness of both the Serbs and the Albanians. In the case of the former, as already suggested, it is the notional "heartland" of their medieval kingdom, where many Orthodox eccle-

- siastical monuments are located. For the latter, it was in Kosovo that their national revival commenced, with the founding of the League of Prizren in 1878.
- 75 See Hobsbawm, Eric J., *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
 - 76 The essentially “constructed” nature of reality in the Southern Balkans is elaborated upon in a rather truistical manner by Karakasidou, Anastasia N., *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood (passim)*.
 - 77 In her historical reconstruction of an extraordinary piece of medieval social life (a case of mistaken identity, Martin Guerre-Arnault du Tihl), Natalie Zemon-Davis aptly demonstrates the enduring problem of locating the truth, as recorded in official documents and/or construed in popular and mythopoeic narratives. This excerpt is quoted by Zemon-Davis, Natalie, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 119.
 - 78 The notional relationship of rational ideas (*vérité de raison*) and matters of fact (*vérité de fait*)—a correlation elaborated further upon by Benedetto Croce, the Italian idealist philosopher and historian—is discussed in Collingwood, R. G., *The Idea of History*, Revised Edition, pp. 194–96.
 - 79 This passage from George Seferis is quoted by Svoronos, Nikos, “Παραδοσι και Ελληνικη Ταυτότητα” in Grigoridas, N., et al., *Κείμενα Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας* (Athens: Οργανισμός Εκδόσεως Διδακτικών Βιβλίων, 1987), p. 218.
 - 80 Quoted by Anzulovic, Branimir, *Heavenly Serbia*, p. 31.
 - 81 This etymological appraisal of “sacrifice” is quoted by Hanks, Patrick (ed.), *Collins Dictionary of the English Language*, p. 1281.
 - 82 Quoted by Faherty, Robert L., “Sacrifice” in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th Edition, Vol. 16, 1974, p. 128b.
 - 83 Quoted by Evans-Pritchard, E. E., *Theories of Primitive Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 70.
 - 84 See Hubert, Henri and Mauss, Marcel, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function* (London: Cohen and West, 1964), pp. 102–103.
 - 85 Although sacrifice seems like a unidirectional act, it is in sociological reality an exchange. The idea of public service could be then understood through this prism. The Serbian problem is that it has proved very difficult to construct a secular, public sphere, in which ethnic sacrifice is converted into rational-legal, public service.
 - 86 In the contemporary forms of Christianity the “experience” of sacrifice is concentrated solely in the participation of sacramental acts, the mass and the contained liturgical commitments. The notion of martyrdom—white, red or green, in other words, a monastic life, fasting and labour, and death for the sake of Christ—is randomly considered as either a social prerequisite or a constant. However, the sacrificial offer of oneself (self-sacrifice) is regarded by Anselm L. Strauss as an act that “signifies the firmest of identities and the most total of commitment”. [Quoted by Strauss, Anselm L., *Mirrors and Masks, the Search for Identity* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1959), p. 42.] The various “gradations” of martyrdom are further elaborated upon by Ryan, J., *Irish Monasticism* (London, 1931), p. 197.

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- 87 An interesting correlation could be drawn between the social (archetypal) appreciation of Lazar's assassination and the symbolic importance of Lincoln's murder, whereby the latter's "sacrificial" death "was [also] indelibly written into the civil religion". This particular interpretation of Abraham Lincoln's assassination in 1865 is quoted by Bellah, Robert N., *Beyond Belief* (New York: Harper, 1970), p. 178.
- 88 In 73 AD, a number of Jewish rebels committed suicide, while under siege by Roman forces, in the desert fortress of Masada. This obscure historical incident was transformed into a venerated and founding national "relic" for the Israeli State. A comprehensive and detailed account on the specific mythical tradition is provided by Ben-Yehuda, Nachman, in *The Masada Myth: Collective Memory and Myth-Making in Israel* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995).
- 89 The late Serbian paramilitary leader, Zeljko Raznatovic (Arkan), constructed a personal "cult" around the notional discourse of Kosovo and the contained moral significations—sacrificial choice, Milos Obilic and the defence of the Orthodox faith. See Duizings, Ger, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo*, pp. 199–200.
- 90 See Lord, Albert B., "Nationalism and the muses in Balkan Slavic literature in the modern period" in Jelavich, Charles and Barbara (eds.), *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and Politics Since the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 258–96.
- 91 Quoted from the passage of the Hebrew Bible, in which Leviticus elaborates on the sacrificial laws (17:11).

CHAPTER SIX

“TO LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF” “VIOLENCE AS ANTITHETICAL TO THE LIFE OF (ORTHODOX) CHRISTIANS AND VIOLENCE AS PART OF THE DYNAMIC PROCESS BY WHICH ‘JUSTICE IS ESTABLISHED AMID THE TENSIONS OF HISTORY’”¹

Synopsis: *The general purpose of this chapter is to further assess the violent content, entailed in the form of “sacrificial” references in Serbian mythopoeic narratives—the Kosovo fable—and as concretely experienced in the historical and cultural context of Serbia. In view of the extensive use of violence—the practice of ethnic cleansing—in the wars which have dismembered the former Yugoslavia, the elucidation of the subject of vehement or forceful conduct is deemed essential within the thematic parameters of the present analysis. Orthodoxy doctrinally sanctions a vision of social life, constituted upon the moralistic precepts of the love ethic, as a prerequisite of cohesion in almost every community. Ethnic or non-ethnic violence, on the other hand, may originate in circumstantial, individual, collective, instinctive, confessional or contextual perceptions that in their variable manifestations may contribute to conflict or invoke strife.*

The point of departure in the decipherment of violence revolves around the question as to whether there are limits beyond which a fellow man, a “neighbour”, is not warranted the value to his or her well being. To that end, the Orthodox position on the subject is considered in relation to functional interpretations and specific, doctrinal elements which delineate the impact of religious beliefs and zealotry. On a broader level, violence, as an instrumental and supportive means to the national cause, expressed in the urge to rid the community of pollution and sin, is reviewed within the Yugoslav socialist context and through the impact of globalisation on the Serbian tradition. The instigation of violence is then appraised in connection to the character–nature of Homo Serbicus and the political conditions of his society.

Homo Homini Lupus

“All who take the sword will perish by the sword”²

The exercise of impetuosity, an instance of devastating and powerful force or an unjust and unwarranted display of physical intention for the purpose of intimidation, injury and destruction, are all aspects of violence, an elusive concept often applied in the description of a recognisable reality and an actual situation. Within the institutional confines and structures of a society, violence is roughly definable as “the illegal employment of methods of physical coercion”³ in the pursuit of individual and collective objectives. Étatist traditions are conterminal with the use of constitutionally sanctioned coercion⁴ in the defence and consolidation of state authority. All human forms of interaction, in this view, are power relations and society is only kept together by the enforcement of order. Whether in terms of morality or expediency, the distinction between acceptable and unjustifiable force and the occasion or degree of its application are troublesome issues, which confront mankind at large. While certain measures of state rule are deemed socially permissible, the collection of taxes, to cite an example, the less subtle exercise of physical, administrative, and economic persuasion—as the means of control and restraint—are of a discriminatory character. Under the specific circumstances of étatist organisation, the imposition of constraints is distinguishable from violence, since the former connote to a physical perception of power, which is ideally ordered and predictable, aimed at the proper and natural⁵ sustainment of things.⁶

The sudden and random nature of violence, as a manifestation of desecration and despoliation of order, is by derivation and use attributed to the mobilisation of social bias, systemic decisions, and the variable human disposition to cruelty, when alternative avenues of negotiation have been exhausted. Considering the innate qualities of sociable and gregarious behaviour—intrinsic to the constitution of man and society alike—the practice of and inclination to violence should be sought in both the historical and cultural conditioning of a community. The hypothesis of a “killer instinct” engendered within each human being obscures individual agency and the basic laws of life—personal and social—springing from the Orthodox tradition. This involves the recognition of power proper and the need for different functions in a collective entity, inclusive of ecclesiastical structures, underlined by the inevitable presence of violence. Approached from a religious perspective, violence⁷—not so much in an actual, as in a potential sense—is socially accounted for through the corruption of the human

being by sin and its spiritual effects. The centrality of the cross in Christian symbolism where Christ suffered and died through human agency is a physical reminder⁸—an instrument of torture—of violence, spiritually transformed by the resurrection. The atonement affected by the death of Christ destroyed the roots of sin—through transference of human cruelty on the victim and the exoneration of the community—, therefore rendering possible again⁹ the fellowship with God.

A secular view of the aggressive and often selfish nature of the human being is found in Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* where he argues that restraint comes from the recognition of mutual interest and the introduction of social laws that set boundaries to natural instincts.¹⁰ Any spontaneous emotions, passionate impulses and the irruption of violence are moderated through the web of social interdependence, functional or institutional, in which the individual is enmeshed. With the étatist monopolisation of physical violence, the transformation of conduct and the tempering of passions take place, while human relations are pacified in a socially prescribed manner. The pursuit of personal salvation should be subsequently neither antinomian,¹¹ nor of an anti-social fashion, as the "fallen" man cannot act well without restraint. Considering the "fallen" condition of the human being and the Augustinian tradition that men are under a harsh necessity of committing sin, the creation of social references to justice, equity or virtue hold evil impulses in check and bring about the security and survival of society. Yet, at the critical points in the social or political processes, when significant conflicts materialise, particularly due to external threat and provocation, their resolution invariably involves violence. As René Girard suggested, the actuality¹² and practice of violence constituted well into the historical era a part of the human understanding of the sacred.¹³ Moulded by primordial experiences, the human being evolved from prey to a confident predator, capable of offering his life in the supreme sacrifice, provided by the ideal context of war. In consequence, as Michael Van Creveld observed, "so elemental is the human need to endow the shedding of blood with some great and even sublime significance that it renders the intellect almost entirely helpless".¹⁴

Violence as a dramatic juxtaposition of moral values pervades the Christian tradition, the founding principle of which rests upon the notion and the ritual enactment of sacrifice that developed into a core reference of the Scriptures. Orthodoxy, as already alluded to, no longer demands or permits a sacrificial act, human or that of an animal,¹⁵ which would involve the spilling of "blood". The human-divine communion is constituted instead upon the

ideas of free will and synergy, although the former is restricted through sin. Society is constructed on a volitional and contractual basis, marked by amity and affiliated with precepts of a religious belief. Nourished by the receptive nature of the human relation to God, an agapeistic content transcends all spatial-temporal limitations and assumes an enduring presence in societal and personal experiences alike. As a permanent referent of individual and collective action, this perception of “love” restores the true essence of man and permeates the character of his relationship with fellow citizens. In this context, the notion of life occupies a central position within the Orthodox cosmology, whereby it emanates from God, is revealed through Christ (*I am the way, the truth, and the life*, John 14:6) and granted cohesion by the Holy Spirit in the constitution of the Church. The divine origin of life also affirms its sanctified importance upon which its social respect is founded. If the sanctity of life is not acknowledged, the essence of the human reality is lessened to a conventional experience.

The use of violence in the abrupt termination of a human life¹⁶ is doctrinally prohibited, as man is created in the likeness and image of God. The conviction that the human person is an imager of God has implications for the respect of his physical hypostasis, since his body is a constitutive element of his identity, self-conscience and his relationship with the environment. Unlike other irrational creatures, the human being possesses the necessary faculties for the mastery of his nature and instincts, which may involve the determination of existential trajectories and even the volitional resignation from life. In the case of the latter, the human sacrifice in an act of abnegation, aimed at the fulfilment of a “higher” cause—personal or collective—is morally justifiable. Man, the socially and rationally inclined being—as opposed to a self-sufficient existence and measure of all things¹⁷—may offer his life under specific circumstances—when at war for the country, faith, and family—and in the spirit of the agapeistic ethos of Christianity.¹⁸ As such, the experience of life contributes towards the moral redemption of humankind—emphasised by the sacrifice and conduct of saints—and is endowed with richer potentialities. Hence, violence is ideally subdued through religion, as the ethical notion of pacified co-operation and the respect of others are ritually instilled in society. To care for the neighbour is a prominent societal theme of compassion, reiterated by the parable of the Good Samaritan who cares for a victim of violence (Luke 10:25–37).

From a purely theological perspective, our respect of others is materialised within the delimited human autonomy and is justified in a theistic context of paternalistic obligation. Notions of suffering seem to be passive, fo-

cusing on the substance of inner-life and the merit of empathy, mutuality and compassion. To that end, a question arises as to whether the neighbour's well being could be warranted in spite of different confessional affinities or perceptions of the social and national structures. In other words, could "sacred" values, which ideally support a peaceful "fabric" of life, evolve into a passionate and potentially violent determinate of survival?

In the *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche suggested that both the practices and the understandings of the world are to be appreciated genealogically, as a common "family" founded in specific acts, which reflect relationships of power and selfhood.¹⁹ In his view, it is on the degree of severity—"all religions are at the deepest level systems of cruelty"²⁰—the notion of the irredeemable "debt" and the sense of penance that the doctrine of the cross can be envisaged. Thus, the creation of a community based upon peace rather than violence in "historical Christianity took on a persecutory character as a result of the sacrificial reading of the Passion and Redemption".²¹ The guilt before God has been invariably used to alienate people from their desires by means of asceticism, while God had been exalted into a facile reference of the profane and an ideal or inherited measure of what life should be. Yet, divine creation, retribution and wrath have intermittently coexisted in the history of mankind through imposed prohibitions—*shed man's blood, by man be your blood shed* (Genesis 9:6)—and punishment, as in the myth of the Cataclysm.²² This ambiguous relation between the experience of violence and the sacred pervaded both the religious scriptures and their entailed significations. In fact, the continuous human need to interpret the diverse experience of a changing world and to locate its affinity with the sacred content²³ (God) engenders the social potential for violent conduct, underlined by Manichean dualisms.

Violence and non-violence are found within the same notional discourse of religion and could hence lend themselves to a different understanding of the community and of the "neighbour". At a given moment, two individual worshippers, deeply devoted to their faith, may reach diametrically opposite conclusions with regard to the will of God and the prescribed paths of action. The plurality of options, entailed within a religious tradition—concepts of the divine, parables and moral teachings—are socially and culturally construed in order to decipher orthodoxy from heresy, morality from immorality and the permitted from the forbidden. It is precisely the contained verve and energy of the sacred that could potentially develop into zealotry and fanaticism. If and when it is collectively required, economic and political ends may mobilise the religious

“structure”, thus conferring violence with a distinctive spiritual undertone fuelled by an ultimate purpose. Found in the totality of the human experience—individual as well as social—, religious beliefs could elevate a mundane matter to a subject of grave concern and an issue of life and death. Notions of evil are concretely identified, which may provide an ideal pretext for action—as a conflict necessitates an antagonist—uniting a group whose membership is delimited through initiatory rites. Emotion is then released, under controlled conditions, encouraging “activities” that engender and support religiously legitimated values directly.

Society rests upon a very delicate balance of self-interest and collective necessity, of restraint and power that intermingle through the forces of creativity and tolerance. The social premium attributed to principles and values is usually grounded in historical processes, and is a matter of subjective commitment or assertion. A dichotomy between professed and operative beliefs²⁴ is endowed within every religion and stage of historical evolution, a fact which provides the context for the instrumental and expressive forms of violence. When an identity of interests permeates the relationship of political and religious institutions, then violence could assume a rather spiritual character.²⁵ It is precisely in the “interpretive” scope of the religious *cultus* and doctrine that the warranties of the neighbour’s well being—to synoptically answer the question on the subject—reside and the prospect of violence potentially finds its justification. After all, it is within the nature and the specific conditions of a community to turn against independence²⁶ upon which individual strength is founded, in order to vindicate its purpose and existence.

It follows that “violence is forbidden... but it is acceptable if God or Jesus inflicts it, or, for that matter, if a Christian leader does it occasionally. Violence is [also] forbidden... but it is acceptable if a Christian soldier inflicts it on others in the line of duty.”²⁷

(Instrumental) Violence and Orthodoxy

“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written: ‘vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord”²⁸

Orthodoxy and violence are on a purely doctrinal level diametrically opposite experiences, as the agapeistic substance of the former is in direct contrast with the actual presence of the latter. Of course, the theological

appraisal of the ethical precept of love is understandably obscured by the reality of the profane, which renders elliptical and highly idealised any consideration of absolute, social pacifism. While notions of religious self-hood—"the isolated core of the true self"²⁹—could include a heightened awareness of the prescribed compassion and self-sacrifice found in Orthodoxy, the psychological processes involved in the development of a group identity often pertain to the violent exclusion of many, on a variety of grounds. In this context, violence is socially accounted for through references to the original sin that generate corollary assumptions, attributing to power and its exercise a rather sinful character.³⁰ However, sin and violence have more to do with how power is exercised in specific conditions, and are subject to perceptions of the physical environment. Religious beliefs, when not overly rationalised, could be experienced as ardent zeal or despair, which could be appropriated by different *dysphoric* moods. These frames of mind afford a broad interpretive scope of religious significations, which also include the polemic demarcation of values and reveal the (dormant) violent content of religion.

Under the circumstances of war that dismembered the former Yugoslavia, the different sensory modalities of Orthodoxy were aptly exposed, marked by a dichotomy between intentions (doctrine) and the profane "conduct" (*cultus*), even at the level of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In the official declaration of Sabor (1991), the Serbian Church offered her qualified support to a military campaign, aimed at the defence and liberation of her congregation. On that basis, the professed ethos of the Serbian soldier was concretely identified with courage and humanness, whilst chivalry on the battlefield is exalted so that the fighter and his people are not besmirched with injustice and crimes. The notional discourse of courage, defence, liberation and humanness afforded variable renditions of spiritual guidance and military demeanour, both firmly anchored by aspects of identity located within the deepest layers of the collective imagination. Their aetiology centred upon perceived and actual liminal situations, closely connected to violence—experienced or anticipated—signalled by a combination of the breakdown of the existing rules of political power and the delegitimisation of institutional structures. Different narratives subsequently emerged in the sense of a higher, not fully realised vision of Serbianhood, imbued with hidden emphases and meanings.

Orthodoxy deciphered the historical experience of the Serbian peoples through "the removal of all those features which bind the historical truth, of necessity, to the terms of common logic. In this way the truth is created

which does not belong to sober reality but to the sphere where the present meets the beyond and where God acts within historical time”.³¹ Upon these transcendent references, the Serbian soldiers were waging war in the spirit of an enduring tradition, inspired and aspired by a genealogy of heroic archetypes and martyrs. Religious support for the territorial integration of the entire Serbian congregation was explicitly granted from prominent ecclesiastical figures. Metropolitan Amfilohije—a nationalist “hard-liner”—observed that “Macedonian soil is strewn with Serbian bones, and the vast number of people there who feel themselves Serbian”.³² Religious instruction informed a younger Serbian generation that “in the skies above the villages of Krajina, there resides the Dear... God... with the Serbian saints and Saint Sava beside him, and that they are more powerful than the entire threatening force on Earth”.³³ In this context, the spatial visibility of Serbianhood was confined within the geography of faith, identified with the physical presence of ancestral bodies in the soil of the enclave and their contained significations.

Violence, as a form of individual or collective self-expression, was often judged in terms of the heroism involved, rather than by its specific results—experienced in the death and displacement of many. The narrower definition of the Serbian nation took recourse from mythology, history, rituals and symbols—on the grounds that they promote courage and pride—and extolled the virtue of self-sacrifice. The perceived impingement of different cultures and religious faiths upon the existing practices and arenas of Serbian life pronounced specific aspects of tradition as the only legitimate source of order. Through references of internal purity, as opposed to the pollution associated with rival and denigrated³⁴ peoples, the Serbian nation was restored into the realm of personal identity. A pristine, original vision of the Serbian being—most fully realised in the medieval past—contributed in the construction of sharp boundaries and margins that define the purity of the Orthodox society. The symbolic capital provided by tradition and the variations deemed legitimate within its mainstream created unity in experience.³⁵ In a sense, “it is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without... with and against that a semblance or order”³⁶ could be established. Punishing transgressions hence developed to a part of the processes, by which national likeness, and not difference, was multiplied, as “only unity saves the Serbs”—*samo sloga Srbina spasava*.³⁷

Historical memories and the awareness of atrocity experienced in World War II were heightened by a socially embodied argument of recurrent concern of persecution. “Sensed” indications of imminent harm to the

physical and spiritual hypostases of the Serbian identity gave birth to communalism,³⁸ intolerance and violence. As a state of mind, communalism emphasised the inner-discourse of Orthodoxy as a conscious facet of selfhood, conferred by the most basic and profound commitment of being part of the national collectivity. In consequence, intolerance or violence, aimed toward all those outside the boundaries of the Serbian enclave, were either manifested in the outer, public realm, in the aggressive pursuit of the "enemy", or remained a province of the mind.³⁹ Instilling or reviving sentiments of hatred—amplified through rumours and stoked by demagogues—provided the pretext for the dehumanisation, depersonalisation and homogeneity of the otherness. Internalised perceptions surfaced and revealed the violent content of a society and in particular instances, the ideological sanctification of force. This Jacobin⁴⁰ predisposition is visible in the political attempts to reconstruct Serbianhood, whilst negating the existence of intermediary associations and institutions.

As already suggested, the existential essence of the Serbian being is centred upon non-negotiable truth claims, concretised in forms of kinship—distilled within the Orthodox tradition—a sense of temporal continuity—the liturgical cycles—a moral vision of space—the geography of faith—and language. Strong sentiments, views and aspirations are incorporated within these intrinsic values, moreover when they are understood to be under attack. The disintegration of the Yugoslav state provided the *raison d'être* for popular anxiety as to the fate and preservation of the Serbian tradition upon which the threshold to violence was crossed. Truth and its external reality are of no great significance in times of crisis, as perceptual experiences—the principle of expectancy⁴¹—influence the actions of the many. To that end, "seeing is believing", not in the literal sense of a descriptive observation, but rather in the "objective" evidence afforded through the subjective existence of the nation.

Orthodoxy's contribution, as the sacralisation of Serbianhood, to either the inception or the actual enactment of violence could be only examined within a symbolic interpretation of the phenomenon. Notions of human nature that attribute any occurrences of violence to "passing disturbances of (man's) emotional life, for the most part provoked, or perhaps only consequences of the inexpedient social regulations... imposed"⁴² could appear unsatisfactory, and wishful to sceptics of an exalted human condition. The appraisal of violence in terms of a Serbian Christoslavic ideology, as the spiritual sanction of cruelty and aggression, is distinctly reductive of the Orthodox faith, abasing her to a praxis of pervasion.⁴³ Divinely legitimised

visions of violence could, under certain conditions, be identified in Orthodoxy in the form of the punishment envisaged for sinners in the afterlife, the exorcism of evil spirits and demons, and the ascetic abstinence⁴⁴ from earthly possessions—although volitionally practised. Even if the violent potential of Orthodoxy is doctrinally insignificant, actions of cruelty were unleashed from individuals who ideally worshipped the love of God and fellow man. Questions of moral principles arise with regard to the religious justification of such behaviour toward others, including the militant manner of ordained priests. Should it then be assumed that for socio-political purposes the means used are always proper, in spite of their specificities? In other words, does an “end” sanctify the “means”?

The answer would be a negative one regardless of the passions, the experience of disorder and violence observed within the Serbian society. Institutionally sustained violence could prove successful in certain instances of societal development, but it may also devour its own offspring when prolonged indefinitely. It follows that a “wide scale use of violence results in a brutalisation of those who employ it, an insensitiveness to special conditions, and to the distinctive features of familiar situations, which can be adjusted by finesse and tact rather than by force”.⁴⁵ Religious references and congregational activities could not solely account for the change of noble feelings—brotherhood and unity—and aspirations to coercion and terror. The freedom and free will, upon which the human–divine communion is forged, have not been construed by all as a “sanctified” pretext for violence. Many Serbian peoples took no part in military campaigns, and refused an involvement in the persecution of others.⁴⁶ For those who willingly participated, the “alleged” adherence to the Orthodox cause exonerated their guilt and shame for the violence committed through its transference to both the victim and the non-mundane sphere—Orthodoxy.⁴⁷ Intolerance, cruelty, or the use of force should in these instances be assessed through the individual and collective content of consciousness of the Serbian society—including that of its spiritual “pedagogues”.

Orthodoxy’s susceptibility to significant political manipulation and mobilisation rendered her a witness to violence and a hostage⁴⁸ to a distorted national cause. Serbian Orthodoxy would have to live in the knowledge that the personal ambitions of certain members of her priesthood lessened her to a passive audience in the profane and violent pursuit of an ephemeral “Kingdom”.⁴⁹

The Serbian Warrior

"Before man was, war waited for him. The ultimate trade awaiting the ultimate practitioner."⁵⁰

"If we are to understand the nature of our aggressive urges, we must see them against the background of our animal origins."⁵¹ Desmond Morris' approximation of violent human agency through the primate origins of mankind afforded an exegetic discourse of our propensity for cruelty, based upon the hierarchical and territorial organisation of space—social and physical.⁵² A sense of societal and geographical location enhances the allocation of limited resources, the effective anticipation of exigencies and our acute perception of security. For human beings, order is tautological with the continuous reciprocity of norms and values, the predictability of motivations and responses and the common interpretation of existential realities. Any actual or assumptive departure from the maintained social environment may result in the expression of the allegedly inborn instincts of hostility, aggression and pugnacity. Considering the human imprinting toward sin or infinite aspiration—"it is the human effort to make our partial values absolute which is always the final sin in human life"⁵³—the prospect of conflict may arise everywhere. Our cathexis in the act and pursuit of war and the idiosyncratic roots of violence pertain to variable motives, including the human impulse for territoriality, the glory of faith or the articulation of frustration—centred on ultimate evaluative precepts, culturally relativised matters, or considerations of a material nature. Subject to the human judgement—the sovereign natural right of every man⁵⁴—of what is right and wrong, endearing elements are preserved and the revenge or even the destruction of their notional antipodes ensues.

Spinoza's account of the war of the contained passions within each individual man introduces the potentiality for destructive acts of aggression, when mistaken or confused representations of reality result in a state of dissatisfaction or misery. Lasting visions of reality have for the Serbian being correlated with the historical and cultural presence of a national enclave physically and spiritually carved from the broader Balkan tradition. Social tendencies of affiliation and co-operation were intermittently experienced with the use of violence in the defence and preservation of the practices of the Serbian life in times of war or a social upheaval. At such marginal occurrences, when a threat to the socially defined reality is provided, the Serbian individual and his collectivity undergo a transformation within the prescribed context of shared beliefs. Upon the legitimacy conferred by

the all-encompassing Orthodoxy, the Serbian man abandons any sentiments of fear and doubt—the real human self—and evolves into a warrior, a hero or the merciless avenger. This process of personal differentiation is accompanied by religious signifiers, amidst prayers and blessings, which maintain the ensuing violence within the bounds of individual and common consciousness. Altruistic motives and behaviour are socially instilled⁵⁵ in each individual as an innate part of his character that may be reduced or magnified through the specific circumstances to which he is subjected.

The relative fluidity of the Balkan environment—with regard to its human content—as a result of numerous invasions and migratory movements contributed to an inherent view of internal fragility—the Serbian enclave—given the ever-lurking outside. Social arrangements—extended family structures—and geographical specificities impacted upon the militaristic ethos of the Serbian society that concretised in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the experience of the Military Frontier (*Vojna Krajina*). A solid reputation of discipline and military prowess historically sustained these border settlements and moulded a Serbian collective awareness, as the designated defenders of the Christian faith. In the mountainous areas, endemic plundering and banditry exhibited a different facet of the Serbian warrior that “became deeply ingrained in many of the pastoralists, particularly among those of Eastern Hercegovina”.⁵⁶ In traditional communities, the aberration or the discontinuity from a mundane existence into a warrior-like mode of being required the abandonment of humanness and the assumption—or expression—of animal forms.⁵⁷ While similar initiatory rites of a primarily pagan origin were not observed in the Serbian tradition, the prolonged male involvement in military issues created the preconditions for a collective sustenance, that stemmed from the continuous need to defend the territory on a group, rather than an individual basis.⁵⁸

The masculine undertone ascribed to the military organisation of Serbianhood is neither accidental nor discriminatory, considering the societal placement of *Femina Serbica*. Manhood’s correlation to war does not preclude a potential female involvement in an instance of strife, however, as a historical occurrence it remained limited. The roles of the hunter-defender were attributed to the male population, allowing for concrete mentions to women as only wives, captives of war or victims. Of course, the human capacity to kill, whether instinctually or impulsively, extends to both sexes under particular conditions—when suddenly forced to defend one’s life, territory and possessions. The metamorphosis of a probable

violent content into a coherent military device known as the soldier—an automaton—solely involved the Serbian men, who were organised so as to “subdue” any fear and to “forego personal advantage, lucre and prosperity”.⁵⁹ The activity of war assumed a tautological presence with the maturation into manhood and the responsibility of leadership. Human strength, irrationality and reason, discipline, cooperation and unity coalesced in the inception of the Serbian warrior and of his military ethic, the latter essentially relating to a Hobbesian view of human nature.⁶⁰ To that end an exclusive definition of Serbian manhood through the act of war would be fallacious in the absence of any specific biological evidence and reason to support what is a decidedly cultural process of personal and collective development.

The mutually reinforcing processes of male self-realisation and warfare—the making of a “real man”—have impacted upon notions of the victim and the treatment of the surviving adult members of the defeated population and, in particular, of the female constituents. In the context of war, the pursuit of humiliation and demoralisation of the opposition had, in certain cases, evolved into a perceived license to ravage or rape in enemy territory. The abhorrent targeting and persecution of women also materialised in the former Yugoslavia, as an aspect of the overall military objectives of ethnic segregation and cleansing. “Mass rapes destroy the victims’... family and community...[and] instil terror, so that [they] will never seek to return to their homes and villages.”⁶¹ Interpreting the motivation and the actual practice of such gender-based abuse led to a correlation between the social patterns of patriarchy and the enactment of the specific offence. Under the circumstances, women are essentially perceived as the mere possession of men, the symbolic significance of which resides in their placement within the family unit,⁶² and the potential shame attached to their destiny. Their physical and psychological abuse by the Serbian soldiers constituted an expression of military nihilism and a distortion of the human limits of foresight, control and reason. Importantly, it placed an emphasis upon the Napoleonic understanding of war as hell,⁶³ in which the unilateral observance of restraint may not be extended to civilians and innocent bystanders. Yet, a general judgement that may attribute to the Serbian “warrior” the characterisation of a heinous rapist⁶⁴ would appear implausible, as nothing in human nature—including aggression, and prohibition—renders the particular offence inevitable and/or specific to a certain ethnicity. The only probable conclusion, if any at all, would pertain to the observation that rape is a crime, which is not indicative of masculine cour-

age or bravery—in fact, quite the opposite—used as a weapon against the more vulnerable sections of a population.⁶⁵

In contrast, recurrent and pervasive, evaluative precepts in the military discourse of the Serbian tradition comprise of references to honour, heroism, freedom and justice. Individual integrity, a respect for moral principles and a state of personal conscience delineate the notion of honour, which is confined by the ethical parameters of the community. Originating within the historical and territorial past of Serbianhood, as concretised by the Kosovo battle, the defence of the family unit, territory, the Orthodox faith and national customs are accorded a particular importance in the life of the Serb soldier. The manifestation of exceptional courage and nobility in the battlefield, in the protection of the oppressed and weak, are socially venerated and acknowledged with public respect. Heroism is validated in terms of its emotive and motivational significance that sustain the internal cohesion and inspiration of the Serbian society. A shared desire for self-rule and sovereignty, formalised in the pursuit of a nation-state, had historically captured the Serb ideal of freedom. As a prelude to eternity in heaven, acts of abnegation and sacrifice are glorified in a culture where a collective and anti-individualistic ethos is strongly pronounced. Prince Lazar and Milos Obilic personify the adherence to self-discipline and national loyalty, although as already suggested, as an archetypal referent their memory had been grossly distorted in the advancement of personal causes and the uncensored practice of barbarism and “lower levels of conscience”.⁶⁶

Under the functional and social imperatives of the communist state, the cumulated heritage of unity, discipline, co-operation and organisation—engendered within the Serbian military tradition—was replaced by the structures of the Yugoslav People’s Army (JNA), that included a policy of mandatory conscription. The awakening of civic and democratic proclivities through the introduction of a universal military service was advocated by Engels, who envisaged a notion of popular mobilisation, a nation in arms,⁶⁷ as the most representative system of national defence. To some extent, historical developments could be explained by the fact that each nation shares the history of its geography. Serbia, and later Yugoslavia, with its exposed position, situated as it is at the crossroads of expansive national units (Italy, Bulgaria and Hungary) had long been obliged to keep a steady eye to its land defences. In consequence, the Serbian military experience in regulatory—rank and file—and étatist matters were incorporated in the creation of the first Yugoslav union (1918) which introduced the Serbian

military value system in the official construction of its army corps.⁶⁸ Political and cultural references of the Serbian martial past—symbolising the eternity of the national being over the ephemerality of politics—along with a continuous preoccupation with status and rank (the omnipresence of warriors) were later approximated by Tito, the ideal socialist, revolutionary and military commander.

The Serbian warrior emulated its leader as the loyal guardian of the socialist cause that presupposed a high degree of unity among citizens and armed forces. Under the constitutional provision of the state and the ideological monopoly of the communist party, the JNA developed into an important instrument of rule.⁶⁹ The protection of the state against external aggression evolved into the defence of the values and claims of the socialist regime. The ideological domination of the party over the JNA rendered the latter a significant avenue of social mobility, delimited by a particular corporal ethos upon which political interests were affirmed.⁷⁰ Marxism, prescriptions for social relations, a collective conscience and notions of the working class were instilled to professional officers and conscripts alike, who were systemically conditioned to revere J. B. Tito, the methodological and strategic epitome of the system.⁷¹ The nature and role of violence in Marxism, stemming from the non-moral reality of a bourgeois state—the governmental arm of anti-revolutionary interests—were justified on defensive grounds, and formed a part of the social efforts against poverty and repression. Engaging in “warfare” with the remnants of counter-revolutionary and reactionary forces—liberal, nationalistic, and clerical elements of the class enemy—provided the *raison d'être* for the strategy of the General People's Defence (GPD). Following on from the Yugoslav expulsion from the Cominform, the system of GPD developed into a necessary defensive deterrent, which aimed at the ideological utilisation of the existing resources and knowledge—the Partisan experience—for the protection of the country. A vigilant and socially educated population could subsequently mitigate the impact of aggressive and irredentist forces, both internal and external.⁷²

The prolonged conditions of military readiness and awareness enhanced the societal and political importance of the JNA and in the process conferred the Serbian soldier with a strong sense of purpose in the defence of social and institutional functions. The members of the army adhered to a Titoist vision of socialist “patriotism”, which worked for the consolidation of étatist unity and unitarianism.⁷³ In the Yugoslav context, the position of the “army cannot be separated from the achievements of the revolution

[and]... cannot depart from socialism”⁷⁴ or even fight against it, a fact that proved crucial in the eventual disintegration of the state. Coupled with the organisation of the society along military lines—the institutionalisation of violence—the stage was set for the outburst of aggression, once the socialist edifice began to fade. In the absence of significant fraternal loyalties to counter nationalist aspirations, repressed violence—“the valuable capital of hatred”⁷⁵—surfaced and mobilised the Serbian warrior into the defence/destruction of the country. Brotherhood and unity were soon contaminated by the goals and claims of the Serbian leadership that transformed the JNA into a Serbian military device, personified by the *ethnified* Serb soldier-automaton.

The “Distortion” of Brotherhood and Unity

“...The country could not accept the bridge and the bridge could not accept the country.”

Ivo Andric’s allegorical representation of a bridge purposefully built to unite a fractured and desolate landscape—animate and inanimate—through a “marvellous structure”, ended in rejection and failure, as the “service” it aimed to provide fitted neither the construction nor the nature of the country.⁷⁶ A similar asymmetry between a notional intent and its final outcome characterised the Yugoslav project that aspired to unite historical, ideological and national specificities into the coherent utopia of socialist self-management. Under the impact of communism a fragile discernment of “mutuality” was arbitrarily established in the form of brotherhood and unity, a political remedy to the anachronism of ethnicity. Underlying differences were ironed out through a heightened perception of purpose that stemmed from the inborn strength of unity in numbers, in other words, a socialist gathering of ideally reconciled antagonists. Disparities on matters of economic, social, demographic, political and cultural organisation were expected to disappear through the redistributive incentives of the central government. The mitigation of interregional conflict and innate fragility were assigned to the federal arrangement of the state and the ideological monopoly of the party. Equal opportunities and rights—national in form and socialist in content—were to be afforded to each constituent member of the Yugoslav brotherhood under the guidance of the omniscient leader Tito. Yet inherent divisions on the systemic form and content of the polity, concerning the delegation of power between central and peripheral authori-

ties, were preserved in the supranational fraternity and gradually contributed toward the collapse of the Yugoslav "bridge".⁷⁷ The resentment of communism, pertaining to memories of exploitation and injustice⁷⁸ were brought to the fore by Tito's death, an event that formally instigated the end of brotherhood and unity.

Of course, a politically construed brotherhood does not erase the probability of conflict any more than communism can erase the historical memory of its adherents. However, the polemic pursuit of national assertiveness and the outburst of violence that followed the country's demise raise a question with regard to the inevitability of aggressive behaviour or war. While the human "capacity" for cruelty and aggression may be invariably present, an exclusive emphasis on the inevitability of war hardly carries conviction. In the presence of numerous causes of strife and possible solutions, warfare is certainly not a universal occurrence. The avoidance of hostility in the relation with ethnic otherness, in other words, moderation, tolerance or the sublimation of violent emotions are apparent options which failed to materialise in Yugoslavia.⁷⁹ The decay of socialism into war between disciples, families and nations originated in the inability or fear to trust others—of different national lineage. Perpetuated by subjective perceptions of ancestry, interethnic grievances continued to circumscribe any reconciliatory effort(s), as underlying historical tensions—World War II—and repressed experiences were not fully addressed. As a result, republican processes of democratisation became congruent with the national consolidation and mobilisation of power. Religious, political and ideological motives provided a high degree of readiness in the realisation of mutually excluding aspirations. Under the circumstances, nationalism "[had] been forced on people, like an ill-fitting shirt. You may feel that the sleeves are too short or the collar too tight. You might not like the colour, and the cloth may itch. But you wear it because there is no other".⁸⁰

If a society is to function at all, there has to be at least a tacit consensus on the part of the majority of its members concerning the fundamental social values that provide the framework on which the population of a given territory is integrated. Self-management and socialism—until the party breakdown in 1990—conferred the basis of social consciousness and integration. In the absence of unity in the Yugoslav political élite and a change in which the politocracy loses its dominant position, the struggle—over several years—to find a way out of the crisis failed. Yet, in the context of a monocratic political paradigm, unity would have only mitigated some of the irrationality, while establishing some space—in which differences

could be played out—was crucial. For the Serbian peoples, the diminished importance of the party was perceived as a setback to their national interests and amounted to a betrayal by other Yugoslav members.⁸¹ Although national and ethnic consciousness is—to a greater or lesser extent—a politically manufactured property, an artificial item forged on the exigencies of power, it could engage pre-existing sentiments in struggles for supremacy—political, social or economic. In practice, the maintenance of ethnic identity or the erosion thereof was considerably affected by factors which could be manipulated by the authorities,⁸² for instance, the social position of Serbian minorities in other republics.

Vladimir Dvornikovic observed that the political essence of a Yugoslav man, from any part of the country, is extremist as “...[he] reacts in a political way only if an issue affects the very root of his being [and] touches his fundamental vital interests of his deepest traditional emotions. [In consequence] Once he has felt the full directness and complexity of an issue inside his own being, he is prepared to commit himself thoroughly to the cause”.⁸³ An analysis of such ethno-psychological and behavioural scope would certainly obscure individual agency in an effort to decipher the nature of the national being. However, it also introduces a different insight in the possible causes to which an individual would be prepared to commit himself. For *Homo Serbicus*, fundamental, traditional and vital emotions pertain to non-negotiable truth claims that delineate the essence of his personal and collective existence. The extent to which an individual attachment and adherence to a communal past and its traditions could and would motivate extreme measures, even discriminatory acts, is variable and depended on personal beliefs⁸⁴ or disposition toward others. Intentional, willful and deliberate acts of harm intended to destroy an ethnic group and to disintegrate the social–political institutions “of culture, language, national feelings,⁸⁵ [and] religion” surfaced from the collapse of the Yugoslav normative order under conditions of social anxiety, failed expectations, anomie and disorientation. The distortion of brotherhood and unity into an exercise of the Thucydidean strategy of annihilation⁸⁶—aimed at the psyche of the enemy—, materialised within a societal context of ethnic plurality and diversity that allowed for the concrete identification of adversaries.⁸⁷

The determination of an alleged or actual threat to the survival of the Serbian community in the form of a group of different ethnic and confessional origin—a human scapegoat—contributed toward the organic unity of the enclave and cemented a pattern of persecution. “Collective anguish and

frustration found vicarious appeasement in the victims who easily found themselves united in opposition... by virtue of being poorly integrated minorities."⁸⁸ Consciously falsified historical evidence along with contradictory value and truth claims presented by the different religious traditions created the impulses for exclusion, expulsion or even extermination. Orthodoxy's attitude to the non-Orthodox is in a theoretical level one of tolerance—"the good is part and parcel of the truth wherever found"—forged upon a shared conviction of elevating humanity to divine life.⁸⁹ In practice, political, social and cultural circumstances delimit the disposition of mind toward others. The intrinsic discrepancies of the sacred—men are admonished to be "good" soldiers—and the innate violence of the communist option licensed a distorted course of "purification" and retribution, in which victims were believed to "deserve" the ensuing punishment. Fuelled by hatred "that like cancer in the body destroys and consumes everything around it like a flame that has no constant face, no life of its own"⁹⁰ and imprisoned in the illusion of justice, the Yugoslav peoples witnessed the abuse of their national aspirations, which proved more durable—resilient than the artificially induced unity of a Titoist brotherhood.

God of Life and Death

"I will send my terror before you, and will throw into confusion all the people..."⁹¹

Religious affinities, often regarded and dismissed as benign societal forces in western communities,⁹² continue to prescribe the cognitive framework in the moral and spiritual life of individuals and societies—the Serbian paradigm—especially when central beliefs, practices and forms of authority are being challenged. Oriented to the traditional values of the past and to the temporal vicissitudes of modern needs, religious rhetoric provides a sense of precedent—a vast repository of knowledge—upon which appropriate courses of action are selected or pursued. Continuity and change have historically coalesced in the development of a religious heritage, delineating, in the process, any exogenous elements—cultural and confessional—from the integrated and internal content. The ensuing scope for evolution is determined by the circumstances of the worshipping collectivity, since issues of faith, in their functional and doctrinal manifestations, do not remain stagnant and changeless entities. Yet, the recurrent interpretation or continuous validity of these imperatives enhances the probability of a

misguided application of religion and of historical aberration when the need for clarity—in the decipherment of betrayal from tradition—arises. Inside a spiritual genealogy, innate contradictions, involving a commitment to life and death (through a sacrificial act of altruism) could remain “dormant” until their advocacy is socially pronounced within a specific context—socio-political and ideological. The shift of emphasis from attempts at religious renewal to culpability, struggle and solidarity may originate in the proliferation of cultural plurality and undercurrents that fragment and challenge a religiously defined sense of cohesion.

Instances of intolerance or violence have gradually multiplied through the impact of increased institutional differentiation and the effect of accelerated change within a global ideological consensus in favour of secular liberal democracy.⁹³ Different discourses of ethnic identity are made relevant to the present and programmatic for the future, in reaction to the historical contingencies of globalisation, as experienced in economic shifts and the apparent vulnerability of the nation–state. Revisionist moods, emerging passions and exclusionist dispositions, occasionally violent, draw strength from convictions of a religious nature in an effort to delimit a political and moral order. “The intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole”⁹⁴ and the “compression” of integrative processes increase the exposure of internal patterns of interaction and transaction to external norms or situations. The pace of global integration and the articulation of new ideas in an intertwined environment deeply affect spiritual residues, existential realities and the meaning of life—on an individual and a collective level. Globalisation supports a cultural variety and plural character, which in certain cases are contradictory and antithetical to existing tradition. Centred upon contemporary prescriptions for the international system, societal structures, mankind at large and the human agent, globalisation would inevitably provoke a religious response to its professed vision of the world.⁹⁵ As a result, “national societies become related to religious cultures and traditions as the economic and power structures... become interdependent at a global level”.⁹⁶

Global developments of an economic and political nature also impacted upon the Yugoslav society and contributed to the context in which the processes of disintegration were played out. A chronic dependency on external financial support rendered vulnerable and inhibited the country’s economy, as the reckoning of Yugoslav debts by the International Monetary Fund in 1983 and the oil shock in the 1970s indicated.⁹⁷ In addition, the collapse of communism altered the political configuration of the region and

the contained strategic importance of Yugoslavia, initiating an internal course of evaluation and eventual de-legitimation. Religious impulses, inherent emotions and sensibilities were particularly pronounced as an aspect of ethnic revivalism that, as already suggested, led to the polarisation of the Yugoslav fraternity and fuelled the ensuing violence. Drawing upon popular superstitions, prejudices and religious illiteracy—"the low level or virtual absence of second-order moral reflection and basic theological knowledge among religious actors"⁹⁸—the probability of aggression and strife increased under conditions of social crisis and agitation. The transmutation of an agapeistic content into a notional license for persecution materialised in a social audience that was or felt strongly victimised and thus was prepared to pursue the actual or alleged perpetrators. It should be noted that the effect of religion in the current temperature of the nationalist discourse is not a unique Serbian property and prerogative. In fact, instances of violence—instigated and sanctioned by religious actors—were experienced in cultures which traditionally adhere to a pacifist cosmology, like the Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka.⁹⁹

Preserving the purity of the Serbian enclave and generating a sense of cohesion by means of "reconstituent" violence—in the form of oppression of designated scapegoats—formed part of a just cause, a just war, the legitimacy and justification for which were enmeshed in the consciousness of many. The determination of the use of force and its initiation did primarily originate from the broader tradition of *jus ad bellum*—force as the "proper" option, in a given context—rather than *jus in bello*, pertaining to the "restraints" that should be practised in its application.¹⁰⁰ Accordingly, any prudential concerns, inhibitions on the proportionality of means—the economy of force—or the immunity of non-combatants were consumed in the defence of sanctified territories and the unification of the nation.¹⁰¹ A shared commitment to the protection of non-negotiable truths and a desire for perceived justice—in a climate of systemic dehumanisation and demonised visions of otherness—allowed for the transgression of the limitations of reason and objectivity, hence transforming a God of life into a notional "vanguard" of death.

Homo et Femina Nervis Laborans (Psychosis)?

“Evil is evil, no matter who committed it or upon whom it was committed. It may have an explanation, but no justification.”¹⁰²

Violence, aggression and cruelty in an act of war, an argument or a mere disagreement may potentially raise a suspicion with regard to the innate humanness and essence of one's being. Suggestions have been fashioned “that because we evolved as specialised prey-killers, we automatically became rival-killers, and that there is an inborn urge within us to murder our opponents”.¹⁰³ Considering the variable manifestations and scope of violence, an unqualified dismissal of this assumption may prove unjustified, in view of the recent empirical evidence afforded by the Yugoslav experience. General prescriptions of collective behaviour and the entailed references of human agency are not uncommon among efforts aimed at the scrutiny of nations and communities. As already alluded to, Heinz Kohut's notion of the narcissist rage—rooted in our early childhood—allegedly influenced the self-esteem and actions—the political disposition—of the German and Japanese peoples, and in a more contemporary application, that of the Serbian society.¹⁰⁴ An analysis of human behaviour in terms of instincts and cultural habits, instead of biological proclivities, was canvassed by Thorstein Veblen, who distinguished three benevolent and normative forms of discernment¹⁰⁵—the parental bent, a feeling toward fellowmen and kin and a sense of workmanship. The concept of cultural lag elucidated the societal processes and accounted for the discrepancy between rapid technological change and the slower organisational and institutional adaptability. A “Faustian” spirit of blood and instinct that will regain its prominence against the power of intellect—in the twentieth century—provided an exegetic discourse for Oswald Spengler in his “morphological” approach to historical evolution.¹⁰⁶ Upon the cumulated findings on human habits, cultural lags and historical stages of development, Stjepan Mestrovic forged his observations on Serb imperialism, expansionist proclivities and aggressive conduct.¹⁰⁷

Ethno-psychological writings on the national character of Serb peoples appeared during the course of the successive wars that led to the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, contributing toward a function and a pretext of detachment. Conformity, mass behaviour, “mental” contagion or innate tendencies were drafted in the cause of medical “apodicticity”, which allowed for affirmative judgements on matters of hostility and cruelty to be

coined. A "paranoid" political culture, comprising of pathological possessiveness, hegemonic elements and megalomania delimited the behavioural and cultural space of *Homo Serbicus*.¹⁰⁸ Negative characteristics, regressive features—a propensity to accuse others—and the projection of bad aspects of the self completed the profile of the Serbian perpetrator.¹⁰⁹ Under the circumstances, the Serbian response ascribed a deeply spiritual, empathetic and resourceful nature to its human subject in an effort to mitigate the conclusions of its counterparts.¹¹⁰

These psychological arguments are permeated by a distinctive sense of scientific urgency—"opportunism"—and a rather apologetic disposition toward the appraisal of human agency on an individual and national level. In a context of accusations and polarisation, one probable explanation would pertain to the considerable variety of human potential, oscillating from destructive cruelty to cooperation and affiliation. Personal proclivities to aggression, conditioned by an early frustration in childhood or a later setback could not, however, explain or amount to an act of war. While it would be an impossible task to scrutinise the behaviour of each Serbian citizen—in order to avoid the foregoing generalisations—it could be concluded that one's approach to warfare and violence is grounded on individual criteria. The reluctance, even the coercion, with which people are drafted in the army and, in most cases, the need to be summoned to a fight for the country—also experienced in Serbia—would tend to support the previous assumption. Yet, if war were not a necessary option for all, our notional "threshold" to violence would appear to be pertinent to conditions encountered at a given moment, by a given society. It is precisely the contextual and circumstantial setting which led to the outbreak of hostilities in Serbia, strongly aided by political leaders who claimed the authority of tradition for their distorted forms of advocacy and extremist activism. The conduct of messianic figures should not obscure the individual and communal responsibility of *Homo Serbicus*. Instead, it should underline the potential danger engendered in the uncritical pursuit of glory at the cost of humanness.

Conclusion

Among the different expressions of Greek popular wisdom, one is rather distinctive for its Delphian insinuation when asserting that a "human soul is an abyss". The decipherment of the violent "content" of the Serbian

being (abyss) constituted the central premise of this chapter, which drew upon the religious position on the subject and the empirical evidence available—the latter pertaining to historical and socio-political developments. Orthodoxy incorporates visions of good and evil—stemming from the original human sin—and mentions of violence—God as a Creator and a destroyer—that could potentially blur her doctrinal prohibition of aggression under conditions of religious illiteracy and societal crisis. A qualified support for means of violence could be also detected in communist theory, in the form of defence and social agitation, which conditioned *Homo Serbicus* for the better part of half a century. Influenced by a salient military heritage, the lack of a historical catharsis and the presence of nationally disposed leaders, the militarised Serbian society burst into war. The ensuing violence was inflicted to proponents of ethnic otherness and eventually trivialised the value of human life within a Serbian collectivity, saturated by aggression and the use of force.¹¹¹

To that end, a probable conclusion would and should refer to the circumstances that enabled the unfolding of cruelty in the wars of the region. As already suggested, any generalisations on either the inevitability of conflict, or a Serbian, “almost erotic attitude toward weapons”¹¹² would hardly carry conviction. Orthodox ambiguity on the issue of violence originating in the interpretation of her doctrine and the function of her *cultus* would be also inconclusive, since the sacred is experienced on a personal level and is not confined to its official representatives and articulations. However, a more coherent picture—on the findings of this analysis and overall—could emerge by a synoptic appraisal of the Balkan Orthodox context, the elucidation of which constitutes the core subject of the following chapter.

Notes

- 1 Quoted by Appleby, Scott R., *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*, Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), p. 116.
- 2 Matthew 26:52
- 3 Quoted by Hook, Sidney, “Violence” in Seligman, Edwin R. A. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 15 (New York, 1963), p. 264.
- 4 In western political thought, violence is often perceived as the necessary means for the sustainment and/or pursuit of political claims. The instrumental use of violence for the maintenance of social order is, however, circumscribed by the rule of law and the legitimacy conferred upon a regime which

rests on majority support. The "connection" between constitutionally sanctioned force and the state revolves around the Weberian understanding of the latter as "the rule of men over men based on the means of legitimate, that is allegedly legitimate, violence". This excerpt from Weber's *The Power Elite* is cited by Arendt, Hannah, *On Violence*, p. 35.

- 5 There is a paradox here. To sustain collective life, which makes the absence of fear or that of the threat of violence possible must exist, both symbolically and as a concrete possibility. The complete absence of violence implies social anarchy.
- 6 The theoretical appraisal of violence as one element in the exercise of power has been challenged by Hannah Arendt, who perceived the former in terms of an antithesis to power. In the context of her work, power emanates from mass and co-operative action, while violence does not depend on mere numbers but on technology, which can magnify destruction. See Arendt, Hannah, *On Violence*, *passim*.
- 7 See Suchocki-Hewitt, Marjorie, *The Fall to Violence: Original Sin in Relational Theology* (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1994).
- 8 The religious significance of the cross, as a transmuted instrument of torture that was once indicative of human viciousness, is eloquently elaborated upon by Leo Tolstoy in *Resurrection*. "No one seemed to realise that the gilt cross with the enamel medallions at the ends, which the priest held out for the people to kiss, was nothing else but the emblem of the gallows on which Christ had been executed for denouncing the very things now performed here in His name." This passage is cited by Gorringe, Timothy, *God's Just Vengeance: Crime, Violence and the Rhetoric of Salvation*, Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion 9 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. viii.
- 9 See Taylor, V., *The Atonement in New Testament Teaching* (London: Epworth, 1940), p. 249.
- 10 See Hobbes, Thomas, *Leviathan*, edited with an introduction by J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- 11 In this context, the concept *antinomian* pertains to the religious doctrine which by the dispensation of divine grace and the adherence to faith, releases a Christian worshipper from the profound obligation of observing any ethical law.
- 12 As violence has a cultural dimension, collectivities are impetuous to violence—or become vulnerable to mobilisation—to defend their own social order, which secures their particular (non-violent) equilibrium.
- 13 This specific appraisal of the experience of violence is discussed in Girard, René, *Violence and the Sacred*, translated by Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), *passim*.
- 14 Quoted by Van Creveld, Martin, *The Transformation of War* (New York: Free Press, 1991), p. 166.
- 15 Santería—a Cuban religion that combines certain traditional African beliefs (Christian saints correspond to spirits called *orishas*) with a Roman Catholic ceremonial—and Hinduism are among the exceptions in the bloodless practice of the sacred. With regard to the latter, the sacrificial slaughter of animals is both popular but confined in the lower social strata.

- 16 Life, as the Creator's gracious and creative gift, is also exalted in the papal encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life), according to which "Man's life comes to from God: it is his gift, his image and imprint, a sharing in his breath of life. God therefore is the sole Lord of this life: Man cannot do with it as he wills... the sacredness of life has its foundation in God and in his creative activity..." (quoted by John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae, Origins*, 24, 6 April 1995, p. 703.). Of course, this perception of human life is applicable to a number of corollary issues—abortion, suicide and euthanasia—which are socially pursued, although from a less polemical perspective, by Orthodoxy. While these matters pertain to notions of violence within a broader debate of direct and indirect killing, innocence and guilt, the reproduction of this discussion and their elaboration are beyond the context of the present analysis.
- 17 The tradition of human self-realisation dates back to the Greek philosopher and sophist Protagoras (480–411 BC), and developed into a humanistic religious perception that interpreted the experience of religion as the sacralisation of a personal identity. The reality and concept of the autonomous "individual" was repeated more strongly during the period of the Renaissance. See Nisbet, Robert A., *The Social Philosophers* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1973), pp. 193–96.
- 18 The symbolic depiction of World War I entailed the rather extensive use of Christian themes that compared the conflict to the Last Supper, and the death of a soldier to the passion of the Crucifixion, the latter being portrayed in certain instances (postcards) as apparently unwounded bodies in the presence of angels. See Mosse, George L., *Confronting the Nation: Jewish and Western Nationalism* (Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1993), pp. 74–75.
- 19 See Nietzsche, Friedrich W., *The Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1969).
- 20 *Ibid*, 2.3.
- 21 Quoted by Girard, René, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, translated by S. Bann and M. Metteer (London: Athlone Press, 1987), p. 225.
- 22 An interesting discussion on the subject of the divine creator and destroyer (God) is provided by Miles, Jack, in his insightful work, *God: A Biography*, pp. 39–46. The author's observations become even more relevant, considering the human propensity for introjecting profane attributes and characteristics to God—being made in his image and likeness—including piety, mercy and anger, the last being a potential source of violence.
- 23 See Page, Ruth, *Ambiguity and the Presence of God* (London: SCM Press, 1985), p. 1.
- 24 See Appleby, Scott R., *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*, pp. 30–34.
- 25 The massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day in 1572—celebrated and defended by Pope Gregory XIII—, the religious reasoning, used in the denial of sympathy for the Roman Catholic victims killed in Ireland by Cromwell, and the Russian Orthodox sanction of anti-Semitic persecutions are certain historical examples of the synergetic relationship between the sacred and the political profane in the initiation and legitimacy of violence.

- 26 See Arendt, Hannah, *On Violence*, p. 44.
- 27 Quoted by Desjardins, Michael, *Peace, Violence and the New Testament*, The Biblical Seminar 46 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), p. 82.
- 28 Romans 12:19
- 29 See Winnicott, D. W., "Communicating and Not Communicating Leading to a Study of Certain Opposites" in *The Maturational Process and the Facilitating Environment* (New York: International Universities Press, 1963), p. 187.
- 30 Ecclesiastical pronouncements on power emanate from references to moral standards, upon which a finite system of meaning is forged and without which the religious faith would disintegrate into sterile isolationism. As Paul Tillich observed, without the ethical dimension religion would decay into a rather emotional distortion of mysticism. See Tillich, Paul, *Morality and Beyond* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 18.
- 31 This particular appraisal of the construction of Orthodox history is supported by the Greek historian Anthony-Emil N. Tachiaos. The passage is quoted in his edited volume *Mount Athos and the E. U.* (Thessaloniki: Kyriakidis Brothers s.a., 1993), p. 103.
- 32 Amfilohije's statement, on the legitimacy of a Serbian policy of integration is cited by Radic, Radmila, "The Church and the Serbian Question", p. 263.
- 33 See *Pravoslavlje*, No. 631-632, 1-15 July 1993. It should be noted that the *pedagogic* introduction of the subject of religious instruction took place in the Bosnian Krajina, under conditions of a protracted military threat—actual or perceived.
- 34 During an interview, published in an article by Radivojic, Rajka, "Zavodjenja za Golesplaninu" (Leading Astray to Mount Goles) in *Intervju* (9 December 1988, p. 27), Orthodox Bishop Atanasije remarked on the architectural integrity of Islamic homes to which he attributed elements of "primitivism" based upon their walled, interior courtyards.
- 35 The creation of unity in experience through rituals of purity and impurity forms the core argument of Mary Douglas' treatise, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1996).
- 36 *Ibid*, p. 4.
- 37 This Serbian nationalist rhetoric forms a part of an emblem, consisting of an Orthodox cross and the Cyrillic letter C (equivalent to S in the Latin alphabet) in the four corners of the cross.
- 38 For the purposes of my argumentation, the concept of communalism pertains to the loyalty to the interests of one's own ethnic community (Serbian) rather than to society as a whole—the multicultural Yugoslav entity.
- 39 The massacres and genocidal practices experienced in the Serb campaigns in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo should not obscure the fact that certain individuals who were not overwhelmed by their cultural and religious identity abstained or even helped members of the "enemy" group at a considerable risk to their own physical safety. In the case of the former, a considerable exodus of people—particularly a young and well-educated generation—marked the wars in the former Yugoslavia, due to their unwillingness to sanction the policies of their respective leaders. For those who remained in the country, the passivity

with which they responded to prescribed political discourses of otherness allowed for the perpetuation of the cycle of violence.

- 40 Used more widely, Jacobin-like tendencies are in this context correlating to the belief that a small elite could represent the popular will of the Serbian society and act in its name. An interesting discussion on the centrality of force—violence—as a component of a political vision is provided by Eisenstadt, S. N., *Fundamentalism, Sectarianism, and Revolution: The Jacobin Dimension of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 68–81.
- 41 The principle of expectancy and its application, more specifically to war, was elaborated by G. W. Allport in the sense that if a particular incident and act are anticipated, their likelihood and occurrence are increased. It follows that the expectancy of an armed conflict increases the probabilities of its actualisation. See Allport, G. W., “The Role of Expectancy” in Cantril, H. (ed.), *Tensions that Cause Wars* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1950).
- 42 Quoted by Freud, Sigmund, “New Introductory Lectures” (1933), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 22 (London: Hogarth Press, 1957), p.104.
- 43 The subject of a Christoslavic ideology within the context of the Bosnian war is discussed by Sells, Michael A., *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 86–92. It should be noted that the author briefly raises the issue as to whether such an ideology is indicative of the Orthodox faith or a mere pervasion of it (p. 90). However, in view of his previous statement—in an “affirmative” tone—that religious values permeated (ritually) certain practices of torture (p. 89) and the absence of any concrete analysis of Orthodoxy, his conclusions on the matter are interesting but excessive. While religion is significant in the decipherment of violence, it is not the sole reason for the dissolution of Yugoslavia, as subsequent analysis shall prove.
- 44 See Stietencorn, Heinrich von, “Angst und Gewalt: Ihre Funktionen und ihre Bewältigung in den Religionen” in H. von Stietencorn (ed.), *Angst und Gewalt: Ihre Praesenz und ihre Bewältigung in den Religionen* (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1979), pp. 311–37. The author’s observations on the forms of religious violence are of a broader perspective, however, certain of these—incorporated in the analysis—are also of relevance to the doctrinal views of Orthodoxy.
- 45 Quoted by Hook, Sidney, “Violence”, p. 267.
- 46 See Sells, Michael A., *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia*, p. 78.
- 47 An interesting comparison in terms of the use of religion in the legitimization of violence could be drawn between the Serbian Orthodox experience and the irruption of Catholic-Protestant violence in sixteenth-century France. In the case of the latter, religious commitment enabled the zealous “worshippers” to pursue their acts of cruelty without a significant display of either remorse or shame. This matter is further discussed by Davis, Natalie Z., *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), p. 165.
- 48 Orthodoxy’s ambivalent relation to violence should not be correlated with an active (if inadvertent) promotion of the latter by the former, which increases

- the propensity of an Orthodox community toward coercion and cruelty. In fact, Orthodoxy is rather vulnerable to post-facto enrolment in violent campaigns, inspired by non-Orthodox factors. In this context, Orthodoxy's "open-endedness" on the legitimate use of force is significant—in a similar manner to the Marxist refusal to disavow revolutionary terror.
- 49 A similar conclusion, although within a more general context, is reached by Desmond Morris with regard to the social application of religion and the role or ambitions of its advocates. To that end, he observed that "the professional 'assistants' of the god figures have been unable to resist the temptation to borrow a little of his power and use it themselves". See Morris, Desmond, *The Naked Ape: A Zoologist's Study of the Human Animal* (London: Vintage, 1994), p. 122.
 - 50 Quoted by McCarthy, Cormac, *Blood Meridian, Or the Evening Redness in the West* (New York: Vintage, 1985), p. 248.
 - 51 Quoted by Morris, Desmond, *The Naked Ape*, p. 99.
 - 52 *Ibid*, pp. 99–126.
 - 53 Quoted by Niebuhr, Reinhold and Sherwood, Eddy, *Doom and Dawn* (New York: Eddy and Page, 1936), p. 16.
 - 54 See Spinoza, Benedict de, *The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, translated by R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover Publications, 1951) (*The Ethics*), Part IV, prop. xxxvii, note ii.
 - 55 Genuine altruistic behaviour and its frequency are progressively increased as one ascends the phylogenetic scale. This argument is supported by Hebb, D. O. and Thompson, W. R., "The Social Significance of Animal Studies" in Lindzey, G. (ed.), *Handbook of Social Psychology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1954).
 - 56 Quoted by Donia, Robert J. and Fine, John V. A. Jr., *Bosnia and Hercegovina: A Tradition Betrayed* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 26. In this context, the historical memory of the *Hajduks* (bandits)—deeply engendered in the regional folklore—who emerged from within the structures of the Balkan peasantry, provided both a significant challenge to the official authorities and an additional reference of a heroic genealogy of violence. See Hobsbawm, Eric, *Bandits* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969), p. 66.
 - 57 The possession of a veritable animal nature within an "eminent" warrior is elaborated by Dumézil, Georges, *Destiny of the Warrior* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 140. Concrete references of such beliefs are to be found in different cultures. For instance, in preparation for the battle, Cuchulain, the legendary hero of Ulster, was transformed into an unrecognisable monster, while the military progression of the young Scandinavian soldier commenced with the initiatory rite of being dressed as and emulating the behaviour of a bear.
 - 58 The corresponding weakness of state structures upgraded—necessarily—non-state institutions in the maintenance of security or order. In a similar manner the Ottoman Empire was—of course—a source of insecurity—confessional, social, political, economic and psychological.
 - 59 These particular attributes of the military man are quoted by Goltz, Colmar

von der, *The Nation in Arms* (London, 1887), p. 37, a nineteenth-century German officer.

- 60 This decidedly pessimistic depiction of the military man and his nature is not solely applicable either to the Serbian soldier or his corollary conduct. Instead, the Hobbesian vision of a “warrior” would extend into the broader realm of the military profession, stemming from an assumption which attributes to human nature a universal and unvaried claim. See Huntington, Samuel P., *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil–Military Relations* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 63.
- 61 This particular appraisal of the social and individual impact of mass rape is quoted by Cohen, Philip J., “The Complicity of Serbian Intellectuals in Genocide in the 1990s” in Cushman, Thomas and Mestrovic, Stjepan G. (eds.), *This Time we Knew: Western Responses to Genocide in Bosnia* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1996), p. 47.
- 62 As already alluded to, certain forms of blood kinship are socially important to *Homo Serbicus*—marriage and the extended family—and notions of honour and shame originate from within their structures. The reputation of a family pertained traditionally to the general morality and axiomatic attitudes of its members that allocated to women an ethos of sexual modesty and a rather matronly role to the wife. See Peristiany, J. G. (ed.), *Honour and Shame, passim*.
- 63 See Walzer, Michael, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (Basic Books, 1992), p. 136.
- 64 See Todorova, Maria, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 138. The preceding remark forms a part of an elaborate argument on the use of violence in the region, in which the author exposes the “irresponsibility with which over-generalised categories are used in academic discourse”. To that end, her observation is also relevant—to my judgement—in instances when the appraisal of a nation—the Serbian peoples—is solely grounded on the military conduct of specific units or their members—Arkan’s Tiger militia, to cite an obvious example.
- 65 The subject of violence in the wars of the former Yugoslavia is discussed in Thomas, Dorothy Q. and Ralph, Regan E., “Rape in War: The Case of Bosnia” in Ramet, Sabrina P. (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans*, pp. 203–18; Sudetic, Chuck, *Blood and Vengeance: One Family’s Story of the War in Bosnia* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998); and Nikolic-Ristanovic, Vesna (ed.), *Women, Violence and War: Wartime Victimisation of Refugees in the Balkans* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000).
- 66 The particular reference to “lower levels of conscience” is quoted by Hadzic, Miroslav, “The Army’s Use of Trauma” in Popov, Nebojsa (ed.), *The Road to War in Serbia*, p. 510.
- 67 Within the context of the socialist ideology, Engels’ views on the subject of a compulsory military service and the mobilisation of the nation were strongly influenced by Jean Jaurés, who suggested that “a nation in arms is necessarily a nation motivated by justice”. See Neumann, Sigmund and Hagen, Mark von, “Engels and Marx on Revolution, War, and the Army in Society” in Pa-

- ret, Peter (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 262–80.
- 68 The introduction of the Serbian military law and the ensuing reaction in the Austro-Hungarian territories is elaborated by Jankovic, Dragoslav, "Drustveni i politicki odnosi u Kraljestvu Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca uoci stvaranja Socijalisticke radnicke partije Jugoslavije (komunista): 1. XII. 1918–20. IV. 1919" in *Istorija XX veka: Zbornik radova I* (1959), pp. 92–94.
- 69 In the context of socialist Yugoslavia, the legitimacy of the communist rule and that of the JNA were inextricably connected, as the latter was calibrated according to the needs of the former and, in particular, of its leader. See Gow, James, *Legitimacy and the Military: The Yugoslav Crisis* (London: Pinter Publishers Limited, 1992).
- 70 See Hadzic, Miroslav, "The Army's Use of Trauma", pp. 513–17.
- 71 Tito's strategic practices and thought were regarded by fellow communists as unique in both their inception and scope, since their applicability extended in all areas of life—not dissimilar to the all-encompassing theory of socialism. The apotheosis of his military inception was aptly manifested in the strategy of the General Peoples' Defence. This particular appraisal of the Titoist thinking is presented by Ljubicic, Nikola, in *Opste narodna odbrana strategije mira* (Belgrade: VIZ, 1977), p. 39. The influence of Tito remained salient even after his death by means of a collective JNA oath that pertained to the continued adherence of "his path".
- 72 The GPD advocated the introduction of similar military structures to those of the Partisan army—at the conclusion of the war—that consisted of "large units for action along fixed fronts; other formations of varying size... according to circumstance; and smaller partisan detachments, organised locally". See Gow, James, *Legitimacy and the Military*, p. 45.
- 73 The military emphasis on Yugoslav "orientations"—political and ideological—became significant during the debates on the re-organisation of the state on confederate and national grounds. See Mamula, Branko, "Ekspoze u Skupstini SFRJ", in *Vojnopoliticki informator*, No. 2, 1988.
- 74 This statement is attributed to the retired General D. Dozet and is cited by the army magazine *Vojno delo*, special edition, 317.
- 75 The concept of the capital of hate and its political importance for the state are elaborated upon by Colovic, Ivan, *Bordel ratnika* (Belgrade: Bilio. XX Vek, 1993), pp. 93–98.
- 76 This excerpt from Ivo Andric's work (*The Bridge on the Zepa*) is cited by Cohen, Lenard, *Broken Bonds*, p. xvii.
- 77 While the Serbian peoples were conditioned in a unitary culture—being the willing worshippers rather than active participants in the political processes—their Croatian counterparts had historically developed a "sensitivity" toward centralised authority, upon which perceptions of the administrative centre of Belgrade were fashioned. On the Croatian response to Yugoslav unitarianism see Schöpflin, George, "Croatian Nationalis" in *Survey, Journal of East and West Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Winter 1973, p. 125.
- 78 Perceptions of unequal treatment within the Yugoslav federation focused on

economic matters and the political arrangement of power. As social, historical and cultural particularities were territorially confined by the federal structure of the state—the republics and provinces spatially delimited most innate differences—any prospect of unity or reconciliation became increasingly difficult. It should be noted, that Serbia's autonomous provinces—Kosovo and Vojvodina—which were created in order to balance the influence of both Croatia and Serbia, left 1.3 million Serbs out of the jurisdiction of their national republic and caused considerable resentment among the population. The creation of the Yugoslav provinces as a politically balancing act is discussed by Connor, Walker D., *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 336.

- 79 The subject of “moderation” in relation to the processes of democratisation is further elaborated—defined—by Navres, René de, “Democratisation and ethnic conflict” in Brown, Michael (ed.), *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 70.
- 80 This pictorial, however, perceptive insight on the imposition of the national option in Yugoslavia is quoted by Drakulic, Slavenka, “The Smothering Pull of Nationhood” in *Yugofax*, 31 October 1991, p. 3.
- 81 See Cosic, Dobrica, “Velika obmana srpskog naroda” in *Politika*, 10 January 1991.
- 82 The subordination of the national cause in the creation of the state under the guidance of Slobodan Milosevic was commented upon by the prominent Serb author Dobrica Cosic who viewed the former as a politician without leadership charisma and qualities, but who instead appropriated the creation of a state as a national goal. See Cosic, Dobrica, *Srpsko pitanje—demokratsko pitanje* (Belgrade: 1992), p. 141.
- 83 Vladimir Dvornikovic reached his conclusions on the Yugoslav peoples in a study published in 1939 (*Karakterologija Jugoslovena—Characterisation of the Yugoslav*) which recorded both differences and common features. This excerpt is cited by Cohen, Lenard J., *Broken Bonds*, p. 20.
- 84 Among the numerous—anonymous—Serbian citizens who did not adhere to an imposed nationalist—purgatorial—rhetoric of hatred, the historian Ivan Djuric, the architect—later mayor of Belgrade—, Bogdan Bogdanovic and the sociologists Nebojsa Popov and Vesna Pesic are prominent examples of personal responses to the issue of ethnic otherness.
- 85 This legal definition of a genocidal crime is quoted by Orentlicher, Diane F., “Genocide” in Gutman, Roy, and Rieff, David (eds.), *Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), p. 155.
- 86 The Thucydidean strategy of annihilation of the enemy—military, economic, and psychological—through the gradual erosion of supportive structures and resources is elucidated by Platias, Athanasios, *Διεθνείς Σχέσεις και Στρατηγική, στον Θουκυδίδη* (Athens: Εστια, 1999), pp. 191–206.
- 87 It should be emphasised that instances of genocide are not the professed fate of every multicultural and plural society. However, the innate presence of an ethnic and racial diversity provide a structural pretext—a precondition—for its potential eruption—in the absence of a strong civic culture and tradition. The

- social context of genocide is discussed by Kuper, Leo, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).
- 88 Quoted by Girard, René, *The Scapegoat (Le Bouc émissaire)*, translated by Y. Freccero (London: The Athlone Press, 1986), p. 39.
- 89 See Constantelos, Demetrios J., "The attitude of Orthodox Christians toward non-Orthodox and non-Christians" in Swidler, Leonard and Mojzes, Paul (eds.), *Attitudes of Religions and Ideologies toward the Outsider, Religions in Dialogue*, Vol. I (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), pp. 63–80.
- 90 This passage is quoted by Andric, Ivo, "Pismo iz 1920 godine" in Tolstoi, Lav, Andric, Ivo and Dolecek, Rajko, *Tri Svedocanstva o Bosni: (1908, 1946, 1992)* (Belgrade: Ministarstvo za Informacije Republike Srbije, 1993), p. 28. In his perceptive story of a doctor who decides to leave Bosnia permanently—*non est salus nisi in fuga*—Ivo Andric canvasses a synoptic but powerful picture of the innate hatred of its inhabitants. This hatred in the narrator's opinion (the doctor) is concealed and leads them to consume their faith and love in the antipathy of others—"the greatest evil and hateful faces could be met around places of worship, monasteries and *tekke*" (p. 29).
- 91 Exodus 23:27
- 92 This particular view is supported in the introductory article by Conor Cruise O'Brien, that focuses on the Punjab crisis in 1988, "Holy War against India" in *Atlantic Monthly*, No. 262, August 1988.
- 93 See Fukuyama, Francis, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).
- 94 This definition of globalisation is quoted by Robertson, Roland, *Globalisation: Social Theory and Global Culture* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1992), p. 8.
- 95 These interdependent dimensions of globalisation are discussed by Robertson, Roland, "Globalisation, Modernisation, and Post-Modernisation: The Ambiguous Position of Religion" in Robertson, R. and Garrett, W. R. (eds.), *Religion and the Global Order* (New York: Paragon House, 1991), pp. 281–91.
- 96 Quoted by Kokosalakis, Nikos, "Legitimation Power and Religion in Modern Society" in *Sociological Analysis*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 1985, p. 368.
- 97 See Allcock, John B., *Explaining Yugoslavia*, pp. 417–31.
- 98 Quoted by Appleby, Scott R., *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, p. 69.
- 99 The militant extremism of Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka who identified with the poorer sections of the cities and rural communities—as these are perceived to be closer to the grass roots of Sinhalese society than the urban secular élite—is elaborated by Kapferer, Bruce, *Legends of People, Myths of State: Violence, Intolerance, and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988). When the survival of the official Buddhist state is under threat, the "abandonment" of pacifism—the doctrine of non-violence (*ahimsa*)—and the use of force evolve into an accepted necessity—"when terrorism is swept away... then the warrior-priests can be ordained" (p. 87).
- 100 See Walzer, Michael, *Just and Unjust Wars*, especially parts two and three.
- 101 References to and declarations of a "just peace" that involved the unification of all the Serbian territories—including those located in other republics—were

- often advanced by the Serbian ecclesiastical hierarchy—as already suggested—in what could be appraised as only a limited and circumscribed support for the pacifist cause. See Appleby, Scott R., *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, pp. 73–74.
- 102 Quoted by Patriarch Pavle, “Statement to the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church”, in *Religion in Eastern Europe*, Vol. 15, August 1995, p. 40.
- 103 Quoted by Morris, Desmond, *The Naked Ape*, p. 118. It should be noted that the author introduces the foregoing suggestion as a part of an analysis of fighting—among human and animals—which is subsequently dismissed in the course of a more elaborate discussion.
- 104 See Schoenfeld, C. G., “Psychoanalytic Dimensions of the West’s Involvement in the Third Balkan War” in Mestrovic, Stjepan G. (ed.), *Genocide after Emotion*, pp. 158–83.
- 105 See Dowd, Douglas F. (ed.), *Thorstein Veblen: A Critical Reappraisal* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1958); Davis, Arthur K., “Thorstein Veblen Reconsidered” in *Science and Society*, Vol. 21, 1957, pp. 52–85; and Daugert, Stanley M., *The Philosophy of Thorstein Veblen* (New York: King’s Crown, 1950).
- 106 Of course, Spengler’s ideas rendered him a precursor and a visionary of a German apocalypse and a prophet of authoritarianism. While his work could not stand serious scrutiny—perhaps only in literary terms—his cyclical view of history in which each culture produces its civilisation—the latter representing a declining and late phase (a conclusion) of the former—left a lasting imprint. See Bojeman, A. B., “Decline of the West? Spengler Reconsidered” in *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Vol. 59 (1983), pp. 151–207.
- 107 See Mestrovic, Stjepan, *Habits of the Balkan Heart: Social Character and the Fall of Communism* with Slaven Letica and Miroslav Goreta (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1993), especially chapters four and five.
- 108 See Jakivlevic, M., “Psychiatric Perspective of the War against Croatia” in *Croatian Medical Journal*, Vol. 33, 1992, pp. 10–17.
- 109 See Gruden, V., “Psychological Sources of the Serbian Aggression against the Croats” in *Croatian Medical Journal*, Vol. 33, 1992, pp. 6–9.
- 110 See Weine, Stevan M., *When History Is a Nightmare: Lives and Memories of Ethnic Cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1999), especially pp. 133–46.
- 111 Manifestations of anomie and the social presence of violence in Serbia are graphically captured in the film *Bure Baruta* (released as *Cabaret Balkan*) by G. Paskaljevic. What is particularly striking about this contemporary portrait of Serbian life is the extent to which violence has permeated its different layers.
- 112 This Croatian psychiatric appraisal of the Serb military tradition is quoted by Kecmanovic, Dusan, “Psychiatrists in Times of Ethno-Nationalism” in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 33, No. 3, p. 310.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BALKAN ORTHODOX COMMONWEALTH “I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD... THE CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, OF ALL VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE ENTITIES... AND IN ONE HOLY, APOSTOLIC AND CATHOLIC CHURCH.”¹

***Synopsis:** The importance of religious practices of an institutional and informal nature, experienced in the geographically porous and culturally diverse Balkan area, provides the thematical core of the present chapter. Orthodoxy's contribution in the construction of a coherent cosmology consisting of shared references of interaction, prescriptions of moral conduct, perceptions of collective identification and forms of reasoning is examined in the societal context of Greece, Bulgaria and Romania. As Orthodox manifestations continue to afford a salient foundation signifier—on a variable degree—to the selected countries, the concise elucidation of respective structures, systemic thought and ecclesiastical organisation is deemed essential in the general scope of the analysis. The conclusions reached on the primary hypothesis—Orthodoxy sacralises the Serbian national identity—delineate the investigative parameters of the chapter. An initial, synoptic reappraisal of the foregoing findings introduces the discussion on the three Balkan states, according to a random rather than intentional sequence. In this context it should be emphasised that the condensed and schematic character—the superficial picture in what is a multifaceted issue—of the argument is reflective of the limitations which the current project is subjected to.*

Orthodoxy as the Sacralisation of Serbianhood A synoptic reappraisal

Orthodoxy, as already suggested, through the dialectical interaction of her religious content—doctrinal and functional—with the national substance of the Serbian being, sacralises the identity of the latter in the confines of

the human–divine communion. Spatial, sacramental, historical, temporal, aesthetic, and spiritual signifiers or referents of faith contribute toward the constitution of a holistic and objectified experience that permeates the nature of the national collectivity. A genealogy of right belief, underlined by the “mediative” presence of venerated patriots and the autocephaly of ecclesiastical institutions, concretise the convergence of the catholic and universal character of Orthodoxy into a unique expression of the national imaginary. An eternal religion is subsequently created, upon which enduring moral perceptions and patterns of societal conduct are constructed. The cumulated impact of these diachronic notions is centred around the radical dualism of good and evil—the latter advocated by the original sin—and is manifested in an agapeistic content, honour, heroism and the family unit, a patriarchal institution that conditions behavioural dispositions in the Balkan social environment. The emerging vision is one of a coherent historical and cultural lineage, which propagates perceptions of Serbian personhood and of a communal belonging.

Under the circumstances, political practices amount to profane references for social cohesion, regulation and cognitive mobilisation that from a purely religious–theological–perspective are temporally circumscribed and physical expressions of human life. National and sacred fulfilment have coalesced—for the greater part of the Serbian history—conferring the polity with an anti-individualistic ethos and a propensity for unitary organisation, sustained by a sense of passivity—originating in the knowledge that human salvation lies beyond the profane commitment of the earthly experience. The narration of the Serbian existence is distilled within the mythopoeic popularisation of the Kosovo battle, which elucidates in a lyrical manner the moral dilemmas of Serbianhood. Upon the antinomy of life and death, the trauma of defeat is allegorically transformed into an ethical victory that produced heroic archetypes and villains—internal or external. In the light of an Orthodox stream of consciousness, renunciation and altruism—the notion of sacrifice—crystallise a measure of loyalty in the pursuit of national goals. Importantly, defeat—inflicted through the inevitable presence of evil—is not perceived as the natural state of an abandoned nation from the omniscient Creator, but as a cathartic process, epitomised in the moral choice of heaven. The incident of war affords a glimpse of the violent potential engendered in human nature—instigated by specific circumstances—and religion, the latter pertaining to mentions of creation and punishment. In consequence, military traditions in the Balkan region have invariably employed an image of a Christian warrior—where applicable—in the pursuance of national emancipation and glory.²

The Greek Orthodoxy

"The mortals... each winter... join Demeter in waiting
through the bleak season of her daughter's absence
each spring they are renewed
by the signs of Persephone's return."³

The widely revered pre-Hellenic myth of Demeter and Persephone, a sacred story of mother and daughter that long pre-dated the Judeo-Christian deification of father and son, conveyed notions of divided loyalties between the earthly creation—preserved by the former, as a giver of grain—and the netherworld. The abduction of Persephone, who was carried off to the underworld and forced to become the bride of Hades, established a seasonal pattern of growth and decay, corollary to her compromised existence, either in the realm of the living or in the presence of the dead. Leaves and vines, flowers and grass grew into fullness when the two goddesses shared the worldly experience, and repose followed the daughter's descent into the company of the spirits of the dead. In the absence of Persephone the bleak season of winter (*αναπαυση*, rest) alluded to Demeter's triumph over the God of the underworld, and manifested her care for the fate of humanity—as the bearer of the immortality of the human soul.

The fable of the Grain-Mother, in its explicit mythopoeic form, is an example of Hellenic idolatrous spirituality, a notional vanguard into the *mysteria* of life, revealed in birth, death, and regeneration. Implicitly, the state of being amidst two different worlds introduces—in an allegorical sense—the contemporary Greek actuality⁴ confined within the diverse, although not contradictory, European tradition of the Enlightenment and an Orthodox heritage. Greek Christianity and Orthodoxy evolved into synonymous notions that converged in the evaluative realm of the latter an ancient lineage of thought—a pagan or gentile, polytheistic background—as the worship of the triune God moved from its Jewish matrix into the Greek cultural context of the Roman empire. Christianity's intellectual and linguistic immersion in the Greek tradition would delineate a particular embodiment of the Christian experience, upon which an important form of faith—deeply theological in its orientation and comprehension—would emerge. A rich genealogy of Christian worship, monastic spirituality, mysticism and iconography would provide the foundations for the evolution of the Eastern doctrine—the character of which is not as legalistic when compared to the Latin Christian expressions.

"From its southernmost outpost in the desert of Mount Sinai, through all

the islands... of the Levant and the Archipelago; having its centre in Greece and in Constantinople”⁵ a geography of faith had historically developed, delimited by the use of the Hellenic language. The placement of the Aegean Sea as the symbolic nucleus, a signifier of Greek Orthodoxy (*ρωμοσυνη*), underlined a binary vision of spatial vagueness and fluidity in contrast to the lucid boundaries of the profane authority and the territorial substance of human agency.⁶ In the early Christian context, the widespread knowledge of the Greek language—a consequence of the linguistic diffusion brought about by Alexander’s campaigns to the East—conferred a “diachronic” Grecian heritage—“*Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit*”—⁷to the worshipping congregations. As the sacred tongue of early Christendom, the Greek language—written and colloquial—contributed to a direct continuity of speech with the apostolic age, signified through the Greek fathers and the canonical and liturgical practice. The Greek inquisitive mind—philosophical Hellenism⁸—and ethical Judaism met in Christianity, conferring aspects of each culture into the emanating faith. A distinctive ecclesiastical identity marked by an organisational sense of localised autonomy, in which the council was central to the life of the church, assumed a normative existence within the rising Byzantine Empire. The Helleno-Christian spirit developed into the undisputed source of faith, based on the original oracles of divine truth, inaugurating at the opening of the fourth century a new era that stemmed from the first Christian city of Constantinople.

The ensuing religious experience revolved around an interest toward the metaphysical–non-mundane–realm, manifested in a rich liturgical life and powerful, mystical immediacy of an eschatological nature.⁹ The Orthodox collectivity shared a communion in the life in Christ—accepted as the point of convergence between the Jewish Messiah and the Greek Logos—whose ultimate sacrifice symbolised a victory over profane realities. An emotional and hermetic attitude of mind permeated Byzantine Orthodoxy structured on an individual appreciation of the sacred, whereby the mundane world held limited soteriological value. Orthodoxy’s perception of the earthly creation incorporated the seemingly contradictory notions of assumption (*προσληψις*) and repulsion (*απωθησις*), according to which the reality of sin led to the latter and the Eucharistic celebration contributed to renewal and reconciliation.¹⁰ In the absence of a “doctrine” of pre-destination, which subsequently delineated the Calvinist disposition, Byzantine Orthodoxy created a theandric¹¹ society, in the pursuit of a historical incarnation of the religious dogma. The ecclesiastical pronouncement of the spiritual sphere and the synergetic relation of the Church with the state fostered a

strong and centralised authority—in the case of the latter—circumscribing the emergence of socio-political counter-forces and differentiation.

By the fifth century, the distinctive traditions of the Oriental Orthodox, the Nestorian and the Roman Catholic churches appeared and became distinguished—although rooted—from the ancient Greek Orthodoxy. Over a period of four centuries—from the ninth to the early thirteenth—under the influence of theological, economic and political assumptions, the differentiation between the two Christian halves would be formalised in the Great Schism. The Church of the East—Greek Orthodoxy—witnessed further distinctions in the ascent of Slavic Christianity and in the development of indigenous cultures and liturgical languages—including original and translated works—as a direct outcome of missionary policy. The linguistic liberality of the Eastern Orthodox Church eliminated probable obstacles to systemic conversion and enabled the projection of a theological content that—“deliberately refrains from attempting to define the ineffable... the ineffable (being) the ultimate reality”.¹² In the initial stages of Slavic proselytism, the ecclesiastical hierarchies included members of the Greek clergy, preceding from the eventual ordainment of the local faithful.¹³ The appeal of the Greek Christian civilisation continued to exert a salient influence on the Orthodox Slav population on matters pertaining to the liturgy, hymnology, asceticism, mysticism and the important bond between the laity and the clergy. The administrative and ecumenical character—as *primus inter pares*—of the Patriarchate in Constantinople historically preserved and intensified the patterns of interaction between the Greek and Slav peoples and, in particular, under the circumstances of the Ottoman conquest.

The maturation of Greek Orthodoxy from a Byzantine mode of being to her contemporary—neo-Hellenic—existence ensued through the organisational structures of the millet system. Civil and religious duties were conferred to the ecclesiastical authority that combined the preservation of a confessional unity with secular responsibilities—the observance of law, the collection of taxes and obedience to the central government. In the context, Orthodoxy continued to delimit the physical and metaphysical hypostases of her congregation in an increasingly severed political environment, as the dual nature of the Patriarchal obligation—an emissary of the Muslim conqueror and the faithful—contributed to internal tensions.¹⁴ When “national” wars of independence were initiated in the nineteenth century, the contained popular sentiments were concurrently focused against the Ottoman occupation and the perceived political and cultural influence of the Greek element within the Orthodox Patriarchate. The demarcation of ecclesiastical jurisdiction on the

principle of autocephaly supported the new regional order that required an organisational autonomy for the national Churches while acknowledging the ecumenical nature of the Patriarchal throne. In spite of a salient Hellenic presence—actual and notional—in Patriarchic affairs, the Greek national project would also separate—due to political consideration—the spiritual matters of an emancipated nation from the intrusion of Constantinople. Greek Orthodoxy became synonymous with the Orthodox community that shared a common liturgical, linguistic and spiritual tradition centred upon the Hellenic culture and Orthodoxy's doctrinal prescriptions.¹⁵

The revolutionary cause and ethnic consciousness of the Greek society were imbued with a distinctively Orthodox confessional and moral character, emanating from an innate conviction of a historical continuity with the distant, primordial past¹⁶—commencing with the apostolic introduction of the Christian faith by St. Paul. The creation of a sovereign Hellenic state reflected the social permanence of past experiences—on a personal and collective level—construed according to the cognitive orientations of the national imaginary.¹⁷ Mnemonic references conferred a theocratic—*anachronistic*—aura to the Greek society, constructed around the firm association of the pastor with the flock. The ecclesiastical—spiritual and symbolic—sanction of the independent state began when Metropolitan Germanos of Old Patras “raised a banner with the cross on it at the monastery of Ayia Lavra. ...Preceding the army, the clergy and monks marched singing psalms... promising the crown of a martyr to anyone losing his life in battle against the Turks”.¹⁸ The national assembly and its constitution—in the first three sessions held¹⁹—confirmed the societal placement of Orthodoxy in a declaration of union of her faith with the profane authority. The ensuing definition of a Greek citizen pertained to his Orthodox affinity—also an initial criterion of political participation—and his respect for and loyalty to the Byzantine Christian legacy.²⁰

The close correlation of political and ecclesiastical jurisdiction persisted in the processes of territorial and demographic expansion and evolution, as experienced by the modern state. Heavily religious and laden with the nostalgia of Orthodox associations, a perception of a national being emerged in the *Great Idea* (*Μεγάλη Ιδέα*), aspiring to incorporate the “unredeemed” Greek population, which remained scattered in the areas of the Balkan peninsula. Neo-Byzantine visions of a Hellenic world organised in an arboreal construct²¹—a gathering of cultural, economic or political centres of Greek tradition—around the spatial and Orthodox stem of the state were proliferated through the synthetic constitution of the national

genealogy and historicism. These irredentist aspirations permeated the territorial advancement of Greece and were manifested in the prevailing national ideals²² of *ethnos* (race or nation) and *patrida* (motherland). The preservation of the Greek geographical integrity was attributed to the “notion” of the motherland, while the incorporation of new regions pertained to the notion of the *ethnos*. Orthodox affinities were prevalent on both perceptions of the national experience, conferring a sanctified sense of purpose and legitimacy to profane authority. As a focal reference of national cognition, the past—Hellenic and Byzantine—provided the cohesive pretext for an uninterrupted genealogy. A consciousness of a collective heritage concretised the worship of Byzantium and the distant memories of antiquity, in spite of temporal “specificities” concerning the appreciation of distinctive²³—not always compatible—cultures. Individual and communal identities originated in a notional progression from an ancient content of polytheism and idolatry to a Christian conviction projected in venerated patriots and the symbols of the modern state—the cross in the Greek flag to cite an example.²⁴ *Progonoplexia* or “ancestoritis”,²⁵ in other words the innate belief of a linear descent from the classical past, proffered the core precept of national distinction within a highly contested spatial and cultural constellation.²⁶

In the project of ethnic sedimentation, the role of the Orthodox Church involved the delineation of membership and the creation of a consistent evaluative context. As the constitutionally²⁷ recognised guardian of confessional affinity, the ecclesiastical hierarchy aligned itself to the Greek administration, allowing the latter to invariably interfere and manipulate the affairs of the former. In the absence of a complete separation of the profane and spiritual sphere, the Greek individual experienced secular inroads in conjunction with the social presence of the sacred. The rejection of Byzantine obscurantism and an adherence to the faith were the existential antipodes of a country attracted to the Western tradition and also mindful of the historic visibility of its past. In the Greek society, “the onset of secularisation altered the church’s position, but it did not cut the umbilical cord. Orthodoxy continued to be instrumental in moulding [the country’s] cultural ethos and in defining [its] identity”.²⁸

Through an extensive arrangement of dioceses and parishes, Greek Orthodoxy maintained her association with her congregation as a purveyor of ethnic conscience, a spiritual *lingua franca* of the constituted structures. The active role of the Church (the principal conveyor of ideological change, symbolism and historical memory) in nurturing the growth and expansion

of the Greek nation, involved the mediation of the existential trajectories of the faithful. Idioms of identity were instilled upon her monopolised control and regulation of the sacramental acts—baptism and marriage—that demarcated the endogenous aspects of life while conceptualising interactive patterns and the cosmos at large. Within rural communities, the ecclesiastical presence provided a source of information, knowledge and advice in the priest, an accessible figure with whom his flock confided freely. Orthodox religious education, the legal responsibilities and duty of the clergy and church officers and the appointment of bishops (to a lesser extent) were reciprocally sponsored by the state, which lend its financial support—continuing to the present day—to the function of Church institutions.²⁹

With the passing of time, the preservation and perpetuation of the Orthodox tradition had historically coalesced with the country's gradual orientation toward a Western European culture and political ethos. As far as processes of acculturation were concerned, religious affinities remained an important determinant of ethnic membership, as a precarious balancing act of the different elements found in the national tradition. Considering the political vicissitudes of the state and the fluctuating character of the polity—liberalism, monarchy or dictatorship—, the Orthodox Church exercised a consistent influence by utilising the art of compromise. Even if her propitious moments—in a political sense—were delimited to the circumstances of the war (the role of Archbishop Damaskinos in 1944–46) or the authority of the colonels (1967–74),³⁰ her societal prominence conferred a clear indication and some semblance of “normalcy”. Formal ecclesiastical structures have customarily absorbed into the Orthodox realm—folk and ethnic—the popular beliefs, superstitions, practices or traditions expressed in the various civil rituals, the cult of the Virgin Mary (the protector of the armed forces), the saints and major festivals. The idea of *economy* (*οικονομία*), signifying a flexibility and discernment in the practice of the Orthodox faith—according to the situation and historical experience of the Church—has regulated the attitude of the spiritual hierarchy.³¹ In the wider—fideistic—scope of institutional or social life, the religious homogeneity of the Greek society, with one dominant and established confession, has allowed for informal and tenuous relations between the individual and the ecclesiastical body to develop.

The connection of political and religious mores does not imply that the distinctive nature of modernity had not affected the context—primary or secondary—of socialisation. The societal progression of Greece from an essentially peasant to an urban environment and the concomitant exposure

to exogenous cultural representations have, to a certain measure, relativised and diffused religion.³² The legality of civil marriage, abortion, divorce, or the introduction of the *demotic* language,³³ manifested an increased detachment from the sacred—at least the strict adherence to—and have invariably provoked a strong reaction from the Church.³⁴ Yet, by virtue of its sacraments, religion permeates the life of most peoples from personal convictions to the family unit and the local community while underpinning the modern character of Greece. For each individual believer, the issue of faith is a part of the symbolic and mediative (Orthodox) superstructure, on which the political and national domain is forged—“a *conditio sine qua non*, of the overall identity and existence”.³⁵ In spite of a rather infrequent and declining church attendance—as such not considered an index of commitment—Orthodoxy continues to accommodate and guide the perceptions and psychological needs of her “flock” in the context of the human condition. The emergent religio-ethical space and freedom have been expressed in a contrasting manner, either as popular discontent with ecclesiastical structural deficiencies and the conduct of priesthood (E. Roidis’ classic work, *Pope Joan* that led to his excommunication) or as strict moralistic orientation, at variance with the liberal nature of the popular culture.³⁶

Looking at the Greek society as a part of, or outside “Europe”—the latter viewed as a notional and a cultural entity—observing the religious faith, or indifferent and characterised by an enlightened disbelief, it could be concluded that Orthodoxy, in either case, is the prevalent and defining principle of Hellenism.³⁷ As Greece’s relation to Western institutional norms and practices is strengthened in the European Union, the instinctive retention of sacred axioms, or the mere—symbolic—tolerance of Orthodoxy, underline the paradoxical undercurrents of the national existence. Under these circumstances of modernity, informality, impersonal relationships and the sharing of external life, Persephone’s dilemma³⁸ persists, searching for her loyalties between the dome of St. Sophia and the columns of the Parthenon.³⁹

The Bulgarian Orthodoxy

An invisible content of consciousness

The perennial fluidity of the Balkan peninsula—without professing a form of extreme geographical determinism—historically produced an interdependent human, cultural and spatial context, an environment of popular

spontaneity and creativity and a world of contradictions, antinomies or abrupt transitions. Being deprived of an autonomous development during medieval times and of a continuity—interrupted in its history by Ottoman occupation—the peoples of the region have shared social–political and economic levels of development and even cultural particularities. The multiplicity of forms of social practice and reproduction evident within the broader regional consciousness have been invariably recorded including for instance, the capacity of social, ethnic and religious groups to impose their ways of life on society at large. Manifestations of residual and traditional patterns of culture provoked an observation in 1900, attributing an ethnic apathy and a lack of patriotic sentiment to the Bulgarian peoples, an adjective “almost unknown (so that) every educated person coming from that country called himself Greek as a matter of course”.⁴⁰ The particular description of a Bulgar alluded to a history of subjection, spent in the shadows of powerful neighbours and allies conferred by the geographical nature of their settlement and the spiritual impact of an Orthodox heritage.

The Bulgars were peoples of Asiatic or Turkic origin, probably related to the Huns, who inhabited in the early 5th century an area to the north-east of Danube. The Bulgarian settlers were subservient to the Avars, a Turkic nomadic tribe against which they gained eventual independence. In pursuit of a political alliance, the Bulgar ancestral chieftain Kubrat accepted the Christian faith—an act of no practical consequences for his peoples—and became a “patrician”—a high non-hereditary appellation, bestowed by Constantine and his successors for services to the Empire.⁴¹ The confessional affinities of the Bulgar khan did not though prompt the spiritual conversion of his nation to Christianity—as the conditions were not deemed appropriate. In the early second half of the 7th century a Bulgarian war-band migrated into the Danubian region, from where, protected by the swamps and rivers, launched consecutive raids against the Byzantine army, and invaded the territory between the Danube and the Balkan mountains (*Αιμου*). Segregated by the area’s geographical limits, it carved its way into the region, and incorporated the Slav tribes (*Σεβερεις*) into an alliance, which challenged the established authority of Byzantium. The Bulgars rose to a position of political prominence, resulting in 681 in the formal creation of a sovereign entity.

The subsequent processes of demographic integration involved the placement of Slavs in scarcely populated sectors of the country, while the Bulgars as the territorial élite would occupy the south and western part of the state.⁴² If national identities were judged to be developing “effectively”

in any place at any time, it could only have been in the Balkan spatial context, where, successfully isolated from neighbours, populations advanced a distinctive sense of belonging. A Bulgarian identity gradually evolved—with the passage of time—from a fusion of proto-Bulgars (*Prabalgari*), Slav tribes and the indigenous peoples—the latter being historically referred to as Thracians.⁴³ Each of the different groups contributed toward a Bulgarian ethnogenesis that assimilated the political and military prowess of the Bulgars and the numerically significant presence of the Slavs into a union, highly reminiscent to that between the English and Normans after the battle of Hastings. The emergent collective consciousness would manifest its ancestral lineage in the eventual adoption of a Slavonic language and the nominative reference of the nation as “Bulgarian”.

The conversion of pagan affinities into a sole commitment to the Triune God commenced in earnest, as the country’s population already included Christian worshippers and its territory formed part of the Byzantine ecclesiastical organisation. Initial encounters with a Christian ethos revolved around the numerous prisoners of war who sought spiritual consolation in circumstances of slavery and misery—setting an impressive example to many of their captors. Yet, a more concentrated effort to bring the Bulgar nobility and nation at large into the Christian fold should be attributed to Boris I (852–89), who introduced the monotheistic dogma to his subjects. On the matter of religious conversion, in itself an outcome of progressive maturation, Byzantine historical sources canvass an idealised picture of enduring interest in Christianity that culminated in Boris’ baptism.⁴⁴ In fact, a rivalry of Latin and Greek affinitive dispositions—competing over the Bulgar flock—would be ultimately resolved in favour of the latter, an option that subsequently conferred a distinctive nature to doctrinal norms and practices. Following the collapse of a Bulgarian–Frankish alliance and a reconciliation with Byzantine authority in 865, Boris I accepted the missionary work of Cyril’s and Methodius’ disciple, St. Clement Slovensky (840–916), a principal continuator and systemiser of the Cyrillic scripture and the Slavonic liturgical language.⁴⁵ In the ensuing period—having secured a recognition of Bulgar conquests—a process of proselytism intensified, as the Bible and Christian liturgy were devised in the Glagolitic alphabet—Old Church Slavonic—which strengthened the Bulgarian commitment to the Christian cause.⁴⁶

The ultimate ambition of an independent Bulgarian Church had though pervaded the nature of the newly initiated congregation, which pursued a

rather ambivalent course of action pronounced in a letter to the Roman see—of a confessional character, with an implicit political undertone. In the pretext of his correspondence with Pope Nicolas II, the Bulgar ruler presented a long list of 115 questions on Roman theology and practice that explicitly hindered on the issue of ecclesiastical autonomy—question 72, on the ordainment of a “local” Patriarch. The papal intervention on the religious matters of Bulgaria and the instruction of the *filioque* were perceived as contrary to the geographical jurisdiction of the Latin Church and were condemned in a patriarchic synod in 867.⁴⁷ Considering the history of the Bulgar settlement on Byzantine soil—inhabited by adherents to the Eastern Church—it seemed appropriate to designate its spiritual affairs to the authority of Constantinople. From a political point of view, forming an independent church as an inseparable part of the Bulgarian polity enhanced the internal cohesion of the state against the prospects of foreign control and involvement. Even if the opportunities for the pursuit of autonomy were circumscribed by the patriarchal and papal reluctance to grant metropolitan authority to a Bulgarian see, an alliance with the Byzantine Church⁴⁸ appeared to approximate a potential fulfilment of national, profane goals. These ambitions were materialised by Tsar Simeon (892–927), who unilaterally elevated his congregation to a patriarchal standing and introduced an old Bulgar version—repudiated from Greek linguistic influences—for scriptural and liturgical purposes.⁴⁹

In the Byzantine political context, the attainment and exercise of power correlated to one indivisible whole, in which the divine and secular pillars of authority were fused—the Church supporting the *autokrator*, while the profane realm promoting Orthodoxy. Aware of the societal prominence of the church and the great advances it had made in the time of St. Clement, the Bulgarian rulers inevitably paid appropriate attention to the national congregation, as the kingdom grew in power and expanded its frontiers. Under the circumstances, secular interests coalesced with strong ecclesiastical administration, since royal authority was closely connected with the existence of a sovereign church and the suitable dignity of its head. As Bulgaria became a power the alliance of which was coveted and pretensions feared in the Byzantine world, its significance extended beyond its geography, serving as a cultural point of reference for neighbouring societies.⁵⁰ Literacy and literature flourished, including preaching in Slavonic, works were translated and transcribed, local worshippers were prepared as priests and deacons, the arts were patronised and the period was characterised by the extensive building of palaces, monasteries and churches

throughout the country. These activities would be intermittently advanced, as Byzantine fortunes oscillated from dominance—the Bulgar state was annexed by 1018—to a rapid decline, with intermediate phases of a Bulgarian revival—the second empire of 1180 (John and Peter Asen) and the reign of John II.⁵¹

Committed to Orthodoxy,⁵² enmeshed in glorified memories of a medieval past and guided by venerated patriots—Ivan Rilski (John of Rila) is the national saint⁵³—the Bulgars witnessed the arrival of the all-conquering Turks who gradually overran the whole region. In the long centuries of Ottoman occupation and trial, religious beliefs contributed toward the salvation and protection of the Bulgar nation that called upon its canonised ancestors for inspiration. Trusting in the power of their saints, the Bulgars were able—more easily—to bear the severe reality laid on them by the conditions of the time. In their origins—neither noblemen nor boyars, but ordinary men—the individual worshiper discovered a popular connection with personal experiences—a life in simple poverty without power and luxury—with which he could identify. The Bulgarian faithful were confronted with the prospect of a confessional ailment—under pressure to convert to Islam⁵⁴ and with limits placed on their support of Orthodox culture—as a Christian subject within a Muslim state. The fall of Turnovo had signalled an end to the country's ecclesiastical autonomy, conferring its spiritual matters to Constantinople—the citadel of Orthodoxy.⁵⁵

With the support of the Ottoman administration, a process of Greek settlement ensued—between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries—that altered the demographic and cultural constitution of the Bulgar lands. Further fragmentation followed with the separation of the Bulgarian church into three different congregations—Ohrid, Pec and the Patriarchate—underpinned by a prevalent Greek element on a hierarchical level. The expropriation of the metropolitan sees and clerical offices by an ethnically exogenous clergy delimited the use of Slavic liturgy into areas of a Bulgar majority, suppressed most Slav cultural activity and confined the remnants of local tradition in remote monasteries.⁵⁶ The population became more heterogeneous—a multi-ethnic mercantilist community supplied a middle class—and periodic appeals to the past by romantic proto-nationalists or rebels pertained to flattering recollections of a medieval existence. Literary material of secular and theological orientation, in a comprehensible language to the common believer, remained scarce during the period with the exception of the *damaskini*, collections of translations and adapted works of a didactic character⁵⁷ named after the scholar and

cleric Δαμασκίνο Στουδίτη. In the limited presence of subtle reminders of past glory and the difficult conditions to which the Bulgar peoples were reduced by foreign conquest, national sentiments were all but forgotten until the Greek independence in 1830.⁵⁸

Influenced by its physical proximity to the *Porte* and the Greek ecclesiastical domination of its worshippers, the Bulgarian national resurgence did inevitably reflect broader geo-political concerns. Its fate as a sovereign entity attracted significant attention, viewed as a potential instrument of Slavonic solidarity against the Ottomans—the Russian perspective—or as an antipode to the Hellenic control of the socio-economic and cultural life of the area—the Turkic objective. In such highly contested environment Orthodoxy provided an enduring and substantive measure of national distinction. The restoration of a spiritual autonomy with the establishment of the national church in 1870—known as the exarchate—contributed to the delineation of the country’s potential frontiers. Yet, the re-constitution of the medieval Bulgar empire seemed impossible as at its greatest extent it included the territory of adjacent states, while its patriarchal centre in Ohrid—a Bulgarian cultural cradle for centuries—and its blurred linguistic boundary⁵⁹ impacted on its political ambition. In an effort to induce a distinctive national consciousness, Bulgar Orthodoxy repudiated all Greek elements⁶⁰—liturgical and doctrinal—from her content, paving the way for the consolidation and emancipation of her flock. A spirit of “resistance” crystallised around the seminal work of the *taxidiot*, Païisi Hilendarski, who focused his attention on aspects of Bulgarian national pride. Upon his historical decipherment of the Bulgar being, conclusions were forged, according to which “of all the Slav peoples the most glorious were the Bulgarians;... they were the first to have a patriarch, the first to adopt the Christian faith... the strongest and the most honoured”.⁶¹

Orthodoxy, as the inherited religion of the Bulgarian peoples⁶² and therefore linked with its history, participated in national politics throughout the experience of revolution, war and communism. With a strange mixture of restrictions and permissiveness, Orthodoxy had weathered public concerns and fear, chronic anxiety and modernity, which invariably pervaded the whole range of societal relations. As a contributor to the national cause, a sustainer of Bulgar culture and a defender of her geography of faith, the Orthodox church embraced *philetism* for the purposes of survival and in her active engagement with society—especially in contemporary conditions. In her quest for relevance, after systemic and aggressive atheist manipulation during communism, Orthodoxy is confronted with a

sharp turn in popular attitudes toward the sacred, as religious rituals return to vogue. The intellectual and spiritual crisis in people's minds is fertile soil for a number of heresies or extrasensory healers, who target the confused and insecure believers. While the spheres of the customary, the ever accessible, the routine and the sacred are subjected to the growing tendencies of politicisation, the Orthodox church is also expected to follow and parallel the profane, étatist course—her historical *raison d'être*. Yet, by nature and definition, Orthodoxy should be absolutely free from any ideological and political commitment in the pursuit of her earthly mission as a Christian community—contrary to evidence of an overemphasis on national identity.

Even when accused of Byzantinism⁶³ or Russophilia, the Bulgar Orthodox Church had served the interests of her peoples—before all else—and remained faithful to her programme, in contrast to many other groups, parties and individuals. As a historical sense of ethnic purpose and conviction had long crystallised, Orthodoxy's challenge is not one of de-hellenisation, but to renounce the vanity of the past—its illusion and futility—and to shake off recent memories, which for many, are an existential dilemma.

The Romanian Orthodoxy

“A Latin isle in the sea of Slavs”⁶⁴

Romanian Orthodoxy constitutes an interesting example of form and content, as a congregation of Latin origin, yet Greek in doctrine and ritual—a counterpoise to the Churches of Bohemia and Poland, which being Slavonic by race, are Latin by religion. The affinitive character of the Romanian community—a fusion of diverse cultural traditions—is reflective of the rival interpretations involved in the decipherment of its historic lineage. Controversy had surrounded the genealogy of the Romanians attributed—according to one theory—to a process of protracted and considerable Romanisation of native peoples. A view supported by national historians considers the country's inhabitants to be descendants of the early Dacians, who retreated into the Banat and the Transylvanian mountains after the Romans left.⁶⁵ The origin of the nominative reference ‘Romanian’ pertains to the Latin essence—in grammar and accident—of the romance language that evolved into the hallmark of its speakers—distinguished from neighbours on all sides. Upon such sense of national distinction, notions of

cultural narcissism were entertained, locating Romania, “between the centre of Europe and the Russian steppe, the sombre lands of the north and the sunny Balkan peninsula in the south”.⁶⁶ The particular depiction of the nation’s physical hypostasis—a segment of its imaginary core—could neither conceal the impact of geography on its development, nor the corollary processes of linguistic dilution—manifested in the use of Slavic and Turkic elements.

The romance culture, as a construction—a daily sacrament—in which participants communicate and share values—land, saints, holy writings, heroes, martyrs and myths—possesses the characteristics of its national religion, Orthodoxy, the foundation signifier of almost every assumption, substance and performative act of the Romanian being. The indigenous Orthodox tradition emerged into history over a prolonged period of time—II–XI centuries—distilled in simple forms of folklore—the hymnology of Christmas that emphasises the divine incarnation—and in a more systemic and scholarly manner. Plausibly but unprovably the initial proselytism of the Romanian congregation is attributed to the Christian members of the Roman legion, followed by the concentrated efforts of Byzantine missionaries.⁶⁷ The ensuing Daco–Getaean spirituality was nourished through Biblical sources of a Slavic and Greek origin, preceding from the development of local scriptures and liturgical practices, which commenced at a later stage—XVI–XVII centuries. As an identifiable precept of national belonging, the Orthodox faith incorporates doctrinal and axiomatic references—baptismal and Eucharistic⁶⁸—within an Evangelical Eastern theology, according to which the worshipping community expresses a human–divine synthesis. In the emergent spiritual context, an atmosphere is created for the divine revelation and the incarnation of Logos.⁶⁹

The theandric disposition of Romanian Orthodoxy is expressed in the central placement of Christ—without neglecting other Triadic hypostases—an intellectual and dogmatic preoccupation, concretised in the study of His nature—divine and human—, His resurrection, will and energies and the soteriological implications. An anthropocentric proclivity permeates her theological assumptions, in a consideration of the immense importance of the human being—made in the image and likeness of God. The Romanian ecclesiology hence supports an ecumenical “vision” of the church, centred upon the apostolic and patristic tradition, in the belief that spiritual unity does not preclude a variety of forms.⁷⁰ In fact, Romanian Orthodoxy, in her pursuit of confessional truth pronounces the practice of asceticism, the virtues of her venerated ancestors—revered for their humility—suffering

and an agapeistic ethos. The experience of the sacred—consummated in the indivisible character of the faith and the catholic mission of the Church—subsequently constitutes a source of information, solutions and indications on the purpose of life. The ecclesiastical discipline is guided by the principles and doctrinal precepts of the Canon Law—in a fusion of the indigenous with the ecumenical—the validity of which is rendered socially relevant by the use of economy (*οικονομία*), as a complementary measure of spiritual adaptation in certain instances.

The interest in the religious dimension of society—the rites of passage and all Orthodox ceremonies—stemmed from the Byzantine heritage, conferred upon the national culture in the medieval Slavic form soon after some mode of political organisation was established in the Romanian principalities.⁷¹ Initial Christian impulses began to penetrate from Serbia and Bulgaria to the south, into Wallachia and Moldavia, culminating in the sedimentation of native scriptural and liturgical norms for the conduct of worship. St. Sava's *Nomocanon*—as already suggested, a collection of legal material—was introduced in the country as a reference for clerical instruction,⁷² in conjunction with other collected works—almost entirely translations—from Greek and Slavonic sources. The ensuing religious sentiments were “fused” with a patriarchal way of life, in an intertwined world of superstition—viewed as protection practices and an intuitive explanation of the cosmos⁷³—, tradition and pervasive folk myths. In the spiritual realm, notable influences of hesychasm⁷⁴ permeated Romania's monastic structures, contributing to a sense of mysticism, based upon ascetic meditation, a phenomenon generated as a reaction to the “rupture” between existential hardships and the great pomp of the Church.⁷⁵ Orthodox religiosity and her societal role would be further amplified by the country's unique placement—after the fall of Constantinople—which enabled its population—an Ottoman vassal—to retain a degree of autonomy.

As a patron of Balkan Orthodoxy, the Romanian principalities encouraged the continuation of Byzantine literary and ecclesiastical tradition, patronised the spiritual activity—worshipping and ascetic—of the faithful and provided shelter to Greek prelates. Through the assumed role of the Orthodox Christian defenders, an unmistakable national identity had emerged, at least among a literate and military élite who, distantly influenced by the Renaissance, actually described itself as Roman. A cultural cradle, appropriately referred as *Byzance après Byzance*,⁷⁶ flourished around the metropolitan centres of Iasi and Bucharest, involving numerous endowments and support of the broader Balkan Orthodox community. Yet

in the affinitive context of Christianity, precepts of confessional diversity were witnessed in the presence of an Uniate congregation, within the Transylvanian region. Transylvania is a geographically unique area at the fringe of the Central European civilisation—to which it belonged—and also in the vicinity of a Turkic-Balkan culture, politically and socially controlled by Hungarian peoples and “Magyarised” tribes— the Szeklers. Considering these intricate ethno-confessional conditions, important differences of mentality had arisen among the areal population, with the gradual consolidation of an Uniate church.

The implications of a consecrated, spiritual departure—in itself a political-religious concoction of Habsburg origin—were evident in the linguistic sphere and, later, in the maturation of concrete ethnic sentiments. A new direction in Romania’s intellectual life emerged in the ecclesiastical—Uniate—use of the native language that contrary to her Orthodox counterpart delimited the influence of Slav and Greek scriptures. In consequence, attempts at a linguistic standardisation would benefit from the activities—social and cultural—of the Uniate church, which also impacted upon the development of a historical discipline in the region—a precursor of national emancipation. As a confessional mediator of two distinctive cultural entities, the Uniate faith provided a thrust of Western ethos in the traditional Romanian society. Efforts to draw the rural community—a bedrock of Eastern Orthodox beliefs and custom—into a process of proselytism were not however pursued, in recognition of Orthodoxy’s significance as the spirit of the nation.⁷⁷ The price though of acquiring a unified church—a part of Romanian Orthodoxy with the Roman See—corresponded to tensions, pertaining to the content of espoused ideas. While many intellectuals shared the religious convictions of the rural population, they also recognised the human capacity to exercise certain control over one’s fate rather than remain the plaything of unseen forces. In the context of Transylvania, the subject of historical apodicticity of ancestral claims, in the sequence of regional settlement—Hungarian and Romanian—similarly provided an enduring source of conflict.

By 1848 liberal ideals had penetrated the political and cultural fabric of the country resulting into an uprising in the Transylvanian region, where the Uniates attempted to assert their identity against Magyar oppression or indifference. In spite of the campaign’s failure, an important outcome would gradually crystallise in the prevalence of French cultural inputs in Romanian affairs. The French connection afforded a specific national—latinised—direction, which pronounced a vision of Daco-Romanian descent

as the primary referent of ethnic uniqueness and of an autochthonous lineage—real or imagined. The emergent construct incorporated Orthodoxy—the organic expression of a past, continually made real by religious ceremonies—with strong anti-Semitic undercurrents,⁷⁸ which treated their human content as an obstacle to the completion of Romania's awakening. Orthodoxy's conservative proclivities were again materialised into the demagogic guise of the Iron Guard, a right-wing terrorist movement (modelled upon Italian–German examples) that revealed the rawest side of a Balkan existence.⁷⁹ The application of the Orthodox dual attachment to the profane hypostasis—the Romanian collectivity—and her sacred nature would be re-enacted by the Lord's Army⁸⁰ and during the country's communist period.

Contrary to the atheist convictions of communism, Orthodoxy preserved her outward structure—the publication of periodicals and theological academies—and forcibly incorporated the Uniate church in her congregation, resulting in a fairly prevalent impression of co-optation and of a privileged position. The ecclesiastical engagement with the communist leaders was partly attributed to the hierarchical figure of Patriarch Justinian, who maintained a cordial relation with political authorities. As a result, the moral constitution of the Church suffered greatly, while her flock was subjected to a close scrutiny by the secret police.⁸¹ The eventual collapse of the system brought the issue of clerical conduct to the fore and released concealed tensions and bitterness with the formal re-emergence of the Uniate faithful.

In subsequent years, Romania, an heiress to Balkan and Central European cultural legacies, has struggled in the pursuance of a self-defined national perception, corollary to its geographical placement at the historical fault lines of the Eastern and Latin Christian halves. Orthodoxy continues to be synonymous with Romanian tradition—a world of hag-ridden and demon-filled beliefs, of which the Dracula myth is only the most conspicuous example⁸²—in almost every part of the country with the exception of Transylvania. For centuries, the two Romanian churches—Orthodox and Uniate—have dominated the spiritual and cultural development of their society and represented its members in diverse situations. Even if the national past involved primarily Orthodox connotations, contemporary Romanianism pertains to the affinitive dispositions of both congregations and “on this basis a new possibility of future alliances and direction could be considered”.⁸³

Conclusion

Orthodoxy's impact on the Balkan cultural mosaic has provided the notional reference for the schematic exploration of three similar—in confessional terms—yet diverse communities in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania. The emergent constellation revolves around an Orthodox cosmology, which instils to her adherents the universal assumptions of her doctrine—shared also by *Homo Serbicus*—while at the same time, affording the evolution of a specific—national—form. For the Greek believer Orthodoxy correlates to a continuum—spatial, spiritual and linguistic—with a Hellenic-Byzantine genealogy. For the Bulgar brethren her religious content—doctrinal or *cultus*—invariably nourishes the political fulfilment of often-contested claims to ethnic distinction. As for the Romanian peoples, it is a salient component of a civilisation that bears the marks of the country's placement as a borderland. For all, including the Serbian flock, Orthodoxy signifies a body of elect worshippers, a perception of esoteric belonging and a communication of “substance” through a spiritual language, which enables its human subject to exist in both unity and in diversity.

Notes

- 1 ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ: The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. This declaration of Orthodox faith (*Πιστεύω*), formally acknowledged by the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325), had been incorporated in the ceremonial and liturgical cycles of the Church and in the sacramental acts (for instance, in baptism). The translation of the ecclesiastical text from the Greek language is that of the author.
- 2 Heroic archetypes and historical references of Christian warriors are shared among the different traditions of the Balkan peoples, originating in the close proximity of the Orthodox religious content with the national project(s) of the latter. The non-universal experience of Orthodoxy had enabled the creation of particular mentions of the kind in respective cultures—for instance, Greek and Serbian—which were even manifested in the Balkan Wars, conducted between nations of the same Orthodox confessional affinities.
- 3 This excerpt from the myth of Demeter and Persephone is quoted by Sprenak, Charlene, *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece: A Collection of Pre-Hellenic Myths* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), p. 118.
- 4 The interplay of European influences and Orthodox orientations is applicable to the modern Greek nation-state, a creation of the nineteenth century, forged upon the principles of romanticism, national emancipation and liberation. In the popular Greek conscience, the constitution of a sovereign national entity amounted to a recent manifestation of an ethnic awareness that commenced in antiquity.

- 5 Quoted by Stanley, Arthur P., *Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church*, Rhys, Ernest (ed.), (London: J. M. Dent & Co. undated), p. 65.
- 6 See Mappa, Sofia, *Ορθοδοξία και Εξουσία στην Ελληνική Κοινωνία*, p. 77.
- 7 See Stanley, Arthur P., *Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church*, p. 65.
- 8 The influence of Greek ideas, customs and culture in early Christianity are elaborated upon by Tomas Spidlik in his concise volume, *The Spirituality of the Christian East*, translated by Anthony P. Gythiel, (Kalamazoo: Cisterian Publications Inc., 1986). The author observes "that the Latin church originated from the Greek church as a branch grows from a tree trunk. The Church was implanted by the Greeks and expressed itself in the Greek language until the end of the fourth century" (p. 351).
- 9 See Müller-Armack, Alfred, "Zur Religionssoziologie des europäischen Ostens" in *Religion und Wirtschaft: Geistesgeschichtliche Hintergründe unserer europäischen Lebensform* (Stuttgart, 1959), p. 345.
- 10 See Papaderos, Alexander, "Orthodoxy and Economy" in *Social Compass*, Vol. XXII, 1975/1, pp. 42–44.
- 11 The term "theandric" connotes to the union of the divine and human nature in the spiritual and natural hypostases. The etymology and meaning of the word is provided by Konstantinidi, Aristidi E., *Οι Ελληνικές Λεξεις στην Αγγλική Γλώσσα*, p. 371.
- 12 Quoted by Toynbee, Arnold, *The Greeks and their Heritages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 99.
- 13 See Thual, François, *Le douaire de Byzance*; Obolensky, Dimitry, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500–1453* (London: Cardinal, 1974); and Hussey, J. M., *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).
- 14 Orthodoxy's socio-political placement experienced instances of instability in the course of the eighteenth century, as the ecclesiastical inability to respond to the variable demands of the Ottoman authorities were further compounded by the internal strains of the Patriarchate. It should be noted that, within the scope of seventy-three years, forty-eight hierarchs were ordained to the role of the ecumenical Patriarch. See Pamboukis, Yorgos, *Στην Τροχία του ενος Θεου*, p. 455.
- 15 The contemporary form of Greek Orthodoxy would include the autocephalous Church of Greece—self-declared in 1833—the ethnic Greek diaspora, the Church of Cyprus and the patriarchates of Constantinople, —as the international centre of Orthodoxy—Alexandria and Jerusalem.
- 16 Orthodoxy's institutional proximity to the Byzantine political sphere elevated the societal function of religion into a distinctive imperial ideology and a core aspect of "unity". The Byzantine experience affected the spiritual survival and the administrative organisation of the Orthodox community—during the period of Ottoman rule—and concretised the notional discourse of ethnic awareness, upon which the wars of independence were fought. The tautological evolution of the Orthodox faith and of the modern Greek nation is understood, within the popular Hellenic conscience, to be the later—final—stage of a historical process that commenced in Greek antiquity—with the founding of Christianity

- in the cities of Athens, Thessalonici, Philipi, Nicopolis and Corinth. See Krikoni, Christou Th., *Η Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησία: Πρωταγωνίστης της Εθνεργσίας του 1821* (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1995) pp. 21–25.
- 17 See Mappa, Sofia, *Ορθοδοξία και Εξουσία στην Ελληνική Κοινωνία*, pp. 77–78. In the context of her analysis, the author attributed a particular quality to the past, as experienced—worshipped—in the Greek society that amounted to an asphyctic influence underlined by the invariable concealment—selective interpretation—of its substance.
 - 18 Quoted by Frazee, Charles A., *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece: 1821–1852*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 19.
 - 19 See Mappa, Sofia, *Ορθοδοξία και Εξουσία στην Ελληνική Κοινωνία*, pp. 79–82.
 - 20 See Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977) pp. 38–52; and Yannoulopoulos, Yannis, “Greek Society on the Eve of Independence” in Clogg, Richard (ed.), *Balkan Society in the Age of Greek Independence* (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1981), pp. 18–39.
 - 21 See Prévelakis, Georges, *Les Balkans* (Paris: Nathan, 1994). From the author’s perspective on the historical development of the Balkan zone, a binary vision emerges comprising of an arboreal and a universal paradigm, which correlate respectively to mono and poly-centred forms of organisation. Supported by his notional designation, he appraises the entirety of the Greek historical legacy in terms of a successive passage from decentralisation—the ancient principle of the city-state, the Hellenic diaspora within the Ottoman Empire—to a mono-centred political archetype—the Byzantine experience, the modern Greek state since 1830. Upon his distinction, an exegesis is afforded on the Great Schism, as the prescribed model of ecclesiastical organisation in the two Christian halves differed substantially—the Roman Catholic being arboreal (centralised), while the Orthodox ascribing to a universal construct (poly-Patriarchal).
 - 22 These overlapping notions are discussed by Rinvoluceri, Mario, *Anatomy of a Church: Greek Orthodoxy Today* (London: Burns & Oates, 1966), p. 138.
 - 23 See Dimaras, K., “Η Ιδεολογική υποδομή του νέου ελληνικού κράτους: Η κληρονομία των περασμένων, οι νέες πραγματικότητες, οι νέες ανάγκες” in *Ιστορία του ελληνικού έθνους*, Vol. XIII (Athens, 1977), pp. 455–84.
 - 24 When compared to the Serbian national imaginary, the mythopoeic essence of the Greek being is substantiated in an assumption of direct descent from the Hellenic past, via the Byzantine cosmology, to the contemporaneity of the state structures and geography of Greece. In this broad temporal context, historical instances—the capture of Constantinople providing the notional equivalent to the Kosovo battle—are conferred with a common cultural denominator in the form of the Attic *koine*—the liturgical language—and the residues of a Hellenic past (raised ghosts), resurrected to serve as an insistent reminder in the altar of national distinctiveness. The subjects of the modern Greek’s Byzantine and Hellenic heritages are elaborated upon by Toynbee, Arnold, *The Greeks and their Heritages*, pp. 1–8, 136–65. This dual genealogy of thought

- (the Helleno-Romaic dilemma) and the contained attributes are discussed by Fermor, Patrick Leigh, *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece* (London: Penguin, 1966), pp. 107–13. See also Vacalopoulos, A. P., “Byzantium and Hellenism, Remarks on the Racial Origin and Intellectual Continuity of the Greek Nation” in *Balkan Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1968, pp. 101–26.
- 25 The foregoing concepts were coined by Clogg, Richard, *A Concise History of Greece*, p. 2.
 - 26 The Austrian historian J. P. Fallmerayer in his work *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters* contested the historic illusion of genealogical permanence, which imbued the nascent Greek nationalism, through the suggestion of a racial submergence of the Hellenic element with the Slav migratory waves. No claim of purity could be subsequently sustained. See Thurnher, Eugen (ed.), *Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer: Europe zwischen Rom und Byzanz* (Bozen: Athesia, 1990).
 - 27 The Orthodox Church is the official ecclesiastical institution of Greece while at the same time freedom of religion is legally guaranteed by the constitution. Considering the societal support for the Orthodox cause, the vast majority of a population of over nine million people are baptised Orthodox Christians (97% have been baptised and 96.5% of these belong to the church—T. Ware, p. 136), some restrictions are consequently imposed on the free circulation of non-Orthodox religious ideas within [the country’s] religious market”. The previous observation is quoted by Makrides, Vasilios N., “The Orthodox Church and the Post-War Religious Situation in Greece” in Roof, W. C., Carroll, J. W. and Roozen, D. A. (eds.), *The Post-War Generation and Establishment Religion: Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (Boulder: Westview Press Inc., 1995), p. 225.
 - 28 Quoted by Makrides, Vasilios N., “Secularisation and the Greek Orthodox Church in the reign of King George I” in Carabott, Philip (ed.), *Greek Society in the Making, 1863–1913* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1997), p. 189.
 - 29 A synoptic historical survey of church–state relations in Greece is provided by Stavrou, Theofanis G., “The Orthodox Church of Greece” in Ramet, Pedro (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 183–207.
 - 30 See Tsatsos, J., *The Sword’s Fierce Edge: A Journal of the Occupation of Greece, 1941–1944* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1965), p. 6, 21, 52–56; Kollias S., *Archbishop–Regent Damaskinos* (Athens: N. P., 1962); Markezinis, Sp. V., *Συγχρονη Πολιτική Ιστορία της Ελλάδος (1936–1975)* (Athens: Εκδοτικός Οργανισμός Παπυρος, 1994), Vol. II (1944–1951), pp. 65–250 and Vol. III (1952–1975), pp. 152–218.
 - 31 “In Orthodox canon law, the term ‘economy’ signifies a departure from the rules of the Church, so as to assist the salvation of particular persons.” Quoted by Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 311. In the context, *ακριβεια* would be the notional antithesis, connoting to strict observance of the ecclesiastical canons and as a religious precept it constitutes an aspect of Orthodox Tradition, the latter pertaining to essential faith as opposed to (distinguished from) mere theological opinion or customs (traditions).
 - 32 The subject of diffused religion is introduced by Cipriani, Roberto, “Religious Influence on Politics in Italy” in *Acts of the 17th International Conference on*

Sociology of Religion (CISR), (London, 1983), pp. 75–95; and elaborated upon in his treatise *La religione diffusa: Teoria e prassi* (Roma: Borla, 1988). The Greek application and relevance of the notion is discussed in Kokosalakis, Nikos, “The political significance of popular religion in Greece” in *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions*, Vol. 64, No. 1, 1987, pp. 37–52; and Makrides, Vasilios N., “The Orthodox Church and the Post-War Religious Situation in Greece”, *passim*.

- 33 On the issue of linguistic reform—standardisation and simplification—a broad comparison could be drawn between the ecclesiastical reactions in Greece and Serbia, as in both cases the Church opposed a departure from the purity of the liturgical language of instruction and scripture. The Serbian movement of linguistic modernisation—the creation of the vernacular language—is discussed in the fifth chapter—in the analysis of sacrificial salvation.
- 34 See Stavrou, Theofanis G., in “The Orthodox Church of Greece”, pp. 197–205.
- 35 Quoted by Makrides, Vasilios N., “The Orthodox Church and the Post-War Religious Situation in Greece”, p. 239.
- 36 Founded in 1911 by Eusebios Matthopoulos, the *Zoe* brotherhood amounted to a lay theological—missionary—movement with strong pietistic orientation that had infiltrated the ecclesiastical ranks—“directed toward an internal apostolate in the Greek Church”. It had also an important societal presence, both in rural and urban areas supported by a sound network of disseminating literature. The movement “coincided with a rediscovery and re-evaluation of the dynamics of Orthodox spirituality... [and] new emphasis was placed... on the Orthodox mystics of the Byzantine period”. *Ibid*, p. 233. See also Meyendorff, John, *The Orthodox Church* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), p. 173; and Ware, K. “The Church: A Time of Transition” in Clogg, Richard (ed.), *Greece in the 1980’s* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1983), p. 220.
- 37 See Ware, K., “The Church: A Time of Transition”, pp. 209–10.
- 38 A Manichean interpretation of Greek ethno-confessional affinity, in fact the fusion of the constitutive principles of Christian Orthodoxy and Hellenism, has been professed by Archbishop Christodoulos. The vociferous opposition toward the introduction of new identity cards, which would preclude any reference to religion, culminated in church-sponsored activism of a fundamentalist nature. The contemporary character of the Greek ecclesiastical hierarchy is analysed by Kontoyoryis, G. D., *Το Ιερατείο: Η Δεσποτική Μεταλλαγή της Ελλαδικής Εκκλησίας* (Athens: Epicom, 2000), pp. 224–61.
- 39 The foregoing antithetical references of the “Helleno-Romaic” dilemma form a part of Patrick Leigh Fermor’s analysis *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece*, pp. 107–13.
- 40 This historical observation is cited by Mazower, Mark, *The Balkans*, p. 88.
- 41 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδόξων Εκκλησιών Βουλγαρίας και Σερβίας*, pp. 7–9.
- 42 *Ibid*.
- 43 See Crampton, R. J., *A Concise History of Bulgaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 1–12.

- 44 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 11–15.
- 45 See Lang, David Marshall, *The Bulgarians from Pagan Times to the Ottoman Conquest* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976); and Ivanova, K., *Kliment Ohridski: Bibliografija 1844–1878* (Sofia, 1966).
- 46 In certain Byzantine historiographic sources—according to Ιωαννης Ζωναρας—the Bulgar proselytism to the Christian faith could be attributed to the physical recovery—of miraculous proportions—from plague and famine, inflicted upon Boris’ subjects. The Bulgarian leader prayed for the salvation of his people and when his “plea” was fulfilled—convinced of the Triune God’s power—decided to assimilate his nation in Christianity. A political interpretation of the processes of conversion is supported by Bulgarian historians, ascribing the incident to a reciprocated agreement with the Byzantine Emperor in return for a territorial enhancement of a spatially confined Bulgar state. Both appraisals of this issue are discussed in Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 13–15.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
- 48 The historical conditions supported the Bulgarian cause for ecclesiastical autonomy, as the Byzantine Court appeared determined to confine the scope of any Latin influences in the region. In consequence, an enhanced jurisdiction over local spiritual matters conferred a remedy toward the ambivalent position of the Bulgar Church. Upon such measure a gradual Bulgarisation of the issues surrounding the congregation was fostered and the consolidation of the Slavic liturgical element pursued.
- 49 See Stoyanov, Petar (ed.), *Churches and Religions in the People’s Republic of Bulgaria* (Sofia: Synodal Publishing House, 1975), p. 20; Zlatarski, Vasil, *Istoriya na bulgarskata durzhava prez sredite vekove* (Sofia: Nauka i Iskustvo, 1971), Vol. I, pp. 256–65.
- 50 See Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans Since 1453*, pp. 24–29.
- 51 See Crampton, R. J., *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, pp. 18–29.
- 52 Bulgar commitment to the Orthodox dogma remained insecure and of a rather precarious character due to the insufficient education of the people, a fact that allowed for the emergence of heretic departures from the doctrinal norms and practices—without reverting to paganism. Bogumilism or *Bogumilstvo*, a dualist tradition professed by an obscure Bulgarian priest—Bogumil—found numerous adherents in the region, in its “plea” for a formidable ascetic life. The Bogumil doctrine attributed the earthly creation to Satan, God’s elder son, rejected any allegorical stories, the sacraments and icons and believed all bodily pleasures to pertain to an evil disposition. Bogumil practices were eventually eradicated in Bulgaria by the thirteenth century. This subject is elaborated by Runciman, Steven, *The Medieval Manichee: A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982, c1947).
- 53 The life of Ivan Rilski personified the preponderance of spirituality over the profane realm, through his pursuance of ethical convictions and a very strict adherence to asceticism. His veneration followed immediately his death, while his reputation pertained to the thaumaturgist nature of a perfectly preserved

relic and the inexpressible scent it emitted. His memory is celebrated on three separate annual occasions, on the 18th of August—his dormition—the 1st of July—when his remains reached the monastery of Rila—and the 18th of October—the movement of his relics to Turnovo. See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 46–48.

- 54 The adoption of a syncretic religious order of Islam (*derviş* sects) by certain sections of the population would eventually ease the pressure of conversion in the Bulgarian lands. The potential threats to the Bulgar Orthodox culture posed by the Ottoman society are discussed by Hupchick, Dennis P., *The Bulgarians in the Seventeenth Century: Slavic Orthodox Society and Culture under Ottoman Rule* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1993), pp. 57–83.
- 55 By the Ottoman conquest the Bulgarians had constructed a discursive field that allowed mutual recognition and hence a measure of cultural reproduction around sacralised practices.
- 56 See Hupchick, Dennis P., *The Bulgarians in the Seventeenth Century: Slavic Orthodox Society and Culture under Ottoman Rule*, pp. 57–83.
- 57 See Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 109–10.
- 58 A synoptic appraisal of the indigenous socio-political conditions is provided by Crampton, R. J., “Bulgarian Society in the Early 19th Century” in Clogg, R. (ed.), *Balkan Society in the Age of Greek Independence*, pp. 157–204.
- 59 The vernacular language of western Bulgaria, Macedonia and eastern Serbia are more closely related—less different—than the Bulgarian dialect, used in the country’s eastern coast.
- 60 The historical recollection of a Byzantine emperor known as Basil the Bulgar Slayer, who annihilated a Bulgarian army and blinded fourteen thousand of its captives, constitutes an important part of a Greek period of imperial power and glory. By its very nature, the specific memory—rekindled in the pursuance of national emancipation—contributed to the perpetuation of ethnic “animosity”—actual and notional—between the two communities.
- 61 This excerpt from *A Slavonic-Bulgarian History of the Peoples, Tsars, Saints, and of all their Deeds and of the Bulgarian Way of Life* is cited in Crampton, R. J., *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 47. On the life, work and influence of Paisii Hilendarski, in particular his apparent phobia of Hellenic contributions to his country’s identity, see also Gonis, Dimitrios V., *Ιστορία των Ορθοδοξων Εκκλησιων Βουλγαριας και Σερβιας*, pp. 115–17.
- 62 Orthodoxy is the majority religion in Bulgaria with about 8 million nominal faithful, of which 3 million are casual or regular churchgoers. The only other sizeable religious group are the Muslims with 600,000 believers. The foregoing figures are cited in Raikin, Spas T., “The Bulgarian Orthodox Church” in Ramet, Pedro (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 181–82.
- 63 See Popov, Stefan, *Bulgarskata ideya* (Munich: Author’s edition, 1981), p. 94.
- 64 The distinctiveness of the Romanian people, concretised in Slavic influences and Latin-rooted forms,—a combination of Slavic linguistic elements, used in ecclesiastical structures and ceremonies and Latinised Orthodoxy—is distilled

- in Ilie Georgescu's analysis, "A Latin isle in the Sea of Slavs", in Weingartner, Erich (ed.), *Church within Socialism* (Rome: IDOC Publications, 1976), pp. 108–109.
- 65 See Condurachi, E. and Daicoviciu, C., *The Ancient Civilisation of Romania* (London, 1971); and Cambridge, R. W., *A History of the Rumanians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934).
- 66 On the basis of Nicolae Iorga's—Romania's prominent historian—observation of his country's physical perimeter a picture is canvassed, according to which Romania is not a part of a broader Balkan context. His views on the subject are a part of his introductory remarks on Romanian national history, and are cited by Maria Todorova in *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 46.
- 67 See L'Église Orthodoxe Roumaine, *De la théologie orthodoxe roumaine: Des origines à nos jours* (Bucarest: Éditions de l'Institut Biblique et de Mission Orthodoxe, 1974).
- 68 According to Alan Scarfe, "Orthodoxy lays legitimate claim to be the original expression of Christianity among the Romanian peoples. While Latin-rooted words form the basic theological vocabulary of the faith, Slavic influence is evinced in... the ecclesiastical structures and ceremony". Quoted by Scarfe, A., "The Romanian Orthodox Church" in Ramet, Pedro (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, p. 210.
- 69 See L'Église Orthodoxe Roumaine, *De la théologie orthodoxe roumaine: Des origines à nos jours*, p. 8.
- 70 *Ibid*, p. 9.
- 71 See Deletant, D. J., "Some Aspects of the Byzantine Tradition in the Romanian Principalities" in *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 59, No. 1, January 1981, pp. 1–14.
- 72 See Obolensky, Dimitry, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500–1453*, p. 410.
- 73 Traditional elements dealing with the unknown—considered effective due to their old age and their socio-political and ecclesiastical tolerance—are found in several rites, prevalent in the Romanian society—for instance in the so-called evil-eye, *deochi*. Observations on the subject are coined by Florentino-Chiaro, Anton Maria del, *Istoria delle moderne rivoluzioni della Valachia...*, Venezia, MDCCXVIII, N. Iorga, (ed.), Bucuresti, 1914, pp. 46–47.
- 74 See Deletant, D. J., "Some Aspects of the Byzantine Tradition in the Romanian Principalities", p. 3.
- 75 See Arseniev, Nicholas, *Mysticism and the Eastern Church*, translated from the German by Arthur Chambers (London: Mowbrays, 1979).
- 76 See Iorga, Nicolae, *Byzance après Byzance: Continuation de l'histoire de la vie byzantine* (Bucharest: Institut d'Etudes Byzantines, 1935).
- 77 Under the spiritual guidance of the Uniate Bishop Ion Inochentie Klein, the church actively pursued its legal rights—in a systematic effort—as prescribed in two imperial diplomas—Vienna and Rome. During the same period Orthodoxy could not serve the cause of the Romanian political rights since it lacked legal status and had no place in the estates system. On the social-political conditions of the time and the placement of the Uniate faith, a number of works by

Keith Hitchins are available. See *Orthodoxy and Nationality: Andreiu Saguna and the Romanians of Transylvania, 1846–1873* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); *The Romanians: 1774–1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996); and “Religion and Romanian National Consciousness in Eighteenth Century Transylvania” in *SEER*, Vol. 57, No. 2, April 1979, pp. 214–39.

- 78 See François Thual, *Le douaire de Byzance*, p. 107.
- 79 Orthodoxy’s supportive role of the political sphere, through her engagement in profane activity as the executor of the national elite, reached its apotheosis in the Iron Guard movement. The Guardist legion was a fascist and anti-semitic organisation rooted in “fundamentalist Orthodox populism”, which distilled and distorted the religious content into a number of nationalistic, functional and historical properties. The doctrinal pretext for its social pursuits stemmed from the experience and instruction of Archangel Michael—the guardian angel who is depicted in the Book of Revelation with a flaming sword, leading the hosts of heaven to battle against Satan. Upon this “vision” of a profound commitment to the religious cause, an authoritarian appraisal of Orthodox precepts was forged that aspired to cleanse the Romanian cultural enclave from pollution—internal and external. See Fischer-Gallatin, Stephen, “Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality, in the Twentieth Century: The Romanian case” in *East European Quarterly*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, March 1984, pp. 25–34; Hitchins, Keith, “Ginderea: Nationalism in a Spiritual Guise” in Jowitt, Kenneth (ed.), *Social Change in Romania, 1860–1940: a Debate on Development in a European Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 140–73; Nagy-Talavera, Nicholas M., *The Green Shirts and the Others: a History of Fascism in Hungary and Romania* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1970); and Barbu, Z., “Romania” in Woolf, S. J. (ed.), *European Fascism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968), pp. 146–66.
- 80 The Lord’s Army was created by Fr. Josif Trifa in Sibiu in 1923, with the aim of improving the moral convictions of Orthodox adherents. The social need for a spiritual rebirth was particularly pronounced and issues of a broader appeal or implication—alcoholism—were addressed. The movement experienced strong opposition—was barred—by the communist regime, however, continued to exert an influence to a segment of the country’s population. See Scarfe, Alan, “The Lord’s Army Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church” in *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Winter 1980, pp. 314–17.
- 81 See Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, pp. 167–68.
- 82 See Klingman, Gail, *The Wedding of the Dead: Rituals, Poetics and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); and McNally, Raymond and Radu Florescu, *In Search of Dracula: A True History of Dracula and Vampire Legends* (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1972).
- 83 Quoted by Scarfe, A., “The Romanian Orthodox Church”, p. 215.

CONCLUSION

*The olive trees with the wrinkles of our fathers
the rocks with the wisdom of our fathers
and our brother's blood alive on the earth
were a vital joy, a rich pattern
for the souls who knew their prayer.*

—George Seferis, *Mythistorema* (Astyanax)

George Seferis' *Mythistorema*—the colloquial meaning of the title is novel—connotes to the components of *istoria*—both history and tale—as an expression with some coherence of the circumstances that are independent of the reader—as the characters in a novel—and *mythos*, a certain mythology, clearly alluded to in the thematical substance of the verse. Beyond the etymological binary of a “heading”, Seferis' work gradually reveals to its audience his enduring inspiration from the past, in the collective recollection of creation, war or destruction and as a personal reminder of loss and exile. The emergent image is seemingly one of sorrow and an index of veracity, stemming from an eminent tradition, permeated by the physical remnants of antiquity and ancestral references—*a prayer for the souls, the blood alive on earth, the wisdom and wrinkles of our fathers*.

The societal evocation of the past, of “fragments of a life which was once complete”,¹ sacralised in the spiritual and profane realm of confessional affinities has provided the investigative perspective of the present analysis. Orthodoxy is the coherent source of allegiance and authority—a concise statement of truth on human experience—and Serbia the notional and physical context for the construction of the national being and imaginary. Issues of identity and membership—by nature abstract and difficult concepts to elucidate—are elevated in the guise of religion, into insights that carry with them the weight of universal wisdom and hence serve to affirm the deeper meaning of human existence. In the decipherment of the

Serbian cosmology the sacred has afforded a broad vision of a collective and individual relevance, neither restricted simply to contemporary history nor in the immediate political aspirations of the nation. The causal relation—the common ground—of nation and religion emanates from the fact that both notions prefer faith over knowledge, operating at the level of deep elementary feelings,² upon which acute sensibilities evolve and enthusiastic devotion to the community is elicited. Expressed in a more pungent and forceful manner, “nationalism, like any religion, calls into play the intellect, the imagination and the emotions. The intellect constructs a speculative theory... the imagination builds an unseen world around the eternal past and an everlasting future... the emotions arouse a joy and an ecstasy in the contemplation of the national God who is all-good and all-protecting”.³

In this way Orthodoxy offers an appropriate setting in which the ancestral and modern world meet without strain or contrivance, allowing legendary and venerated figures to metaphorically “appear” in the present reality earning the worshipper’s belief and conviction. Orthodoxy’s significance lies in her preoccupation and engagement in fashioning a social framework that is strong in terms of doctrine, ethics, didactic myths and ritualistic form. Considering the perennial frustrations of the human being—man of inconstancy, of wanderings and war—always moving along similar longings and questions though they may differ and change in value, religion confers an important sense of stability through a symbolic representation of fate, distilled in holy sacraments, martyrs, saints, devils and instruction. It is the depth of this spiritual awareness, in which the past is always there to illuminate the present—what is now, was then—that gives substance to the life of *Homo Serbicus*. In keeping with the passing of time and the different conditions of our world, the genealogy of one’s ancestors plays a crucial role, one that should not be regarded in isolation, since all the various threads of tradition—literary, folk and mythic—are tightly woven together.

The implication for the Serbian believer is that he has come to rely so deeply on his generic ideas regarding a sanctified past that his perceptions of Orthodoxy are simulations of culture and history, realities with territorial and referential implications. In this vision of the nation the emphasis is on performative acts—oaths, celebrations and induction ceremonies—all privileging the visual sense, in which the participant is integrated into a body of elect worshippers. Ideas and structures of blood kinship are highly relevant in this process of nation-building, articulating Serbian sentiment through the memory of honoured forefathers, rooted—buried—in the soil,

the invocation of whom nourishes claims of a historical continuity—a *conditio sine qua non* of internal cohesion. The potent connection of the physical–geographical–space with the human spirit can transform a personal experience or insight into a metaphor that defines the character of our times; for example, the metaphor of sacrifice, victimisation and suffering. The Serbian tradition is hence identified, despite all of its manifestations and subdivisions throughout history, in terms of the single distinctive trait of the Orthodox faith. One really senses the Serbian existence in its entirety, as it is represented from the age of St. Sava down to the contemporary period, bestowed with overtones and undertones, sometimes too subtle for a foreign ear to catch. But even as one “detects” the sound of a richly traditional voice, one is also aware of its validity to the present age, often contributing to an effort of escapism from the bewilderment and affliction of a modern life.

This Orthodox element of *progonoplexia* ascribes to *Homo Serbicus* a concise perception of a collective identity, which incorporates the actual into the imaginary and the idiosyncratic into the objective. Within the ensuing mode of being, threats—genuine or notional—are identified, conspiratorial assumptions⁴ are articulated and the idealisation of ultimate goals—Great Serbia—ensues. History is re-discovered and rewritten presented with a lyrical and narcissist intent. Its narrative functions in a Manichean pretext, pertaining to a once peaceful, powerful and content nation upon which defeat and suffering was inflicted, followed by its eventual liberation and glory. An eschatological disposition permeates the Serbian heritage—in the hope of returning to a golden age—focused on the same protagonist, its peoples, warriors, sacrificial figures and heroes. It is precisely for her mnemonic capacity, in the sedimentation of the most important properties of Serbianhood—spatial, temporal, spiritual, animate and inanimate—into a sanctified and diachronic referent, that Orthodoxy occupies a central place in the life of the nation. As the background against which social action engages, religious beliefs imply the moral worth of human interaction and serve to stimulate a conception of being in which personal interests and whim are confined within the collective realm, its shared traits and expectations. Orthodoxy is the unifying thread of variable traditions and categories—Chetnik, anti-socialist, partisan, communist⁵—of the Serbian community, which is geographically scattered, historically diverse, distilled in the remains of its forebears and according to some, a “heavenly country”, and not a physical entity.⁶ It is the kinship–soil–Orthodoxy connection so often incomprehensible to nations with shorter

and different history or with more superficial memories,⁷ that provides *Homo Serbicus* with protection against those too-easily won positions—the ephemeral nature of the profane—and too easily assumed despair.⁸

The culminating picture is one of unity in diversity; of popular and vivid recollections of countless martyrs and suffering; of anxiety and fear in the pursuit of absolute causes; and of an Orthodox faith, for most an innate part of their identity, irrespective of whether they are active or not in practising their beliefs. From such a coherent paradigm on the Serbian existence, certain interpretive possibilities may arise with regard to the synoptic assessment of segments of the nation's recent past, present and future—in the knowledge that often predictions amount to generalisations, metoposcopic appraisals and even mere ventures into the subjective.

Yet, an obvious question would pertain to the religious content of Yugoslavia's disintegration and ensuing conflict.⁹ In other words, did confessional divisions solely fuel the Yugoslav wars? The answer could be partly in the affirmative, considering the social prevalence of affinitive assumptions—or residues of—in the processes of nation-building and differentiation, with the primal example of the Bosniak identity—grounded on Islamic tradition. In addition, an observer of the region ought to be mindful of perceptions of unequal treatment and an underlying distrust—the product of the disputes of the inter-war period—that pervaded the Yugoslav federation. The dynamics of such a confrontation, underpinned by charges of Serbian hegemony, intellectual snobbism or *schadenfreude* proved absolutely fatal. In retrospect, it is quite evident that participation in Yugoslavia was a way of realising pre-existing national goals, which the communist leaders' nationality policy and modernisation programmes failed to mitigate.

If a society is to function at all, there has to be at least a tacit consensus on the part of the majority of its members, on important social values and on its institutional form, including the structure of the state. This evaluative consensus provides a framework for social integration—Orthodoxy in the Serbian case—a social-political reality, which largely pertains to the current prospects of a civic and secular sphere of interaction in Serbia. Processes of secularisation correlate to certain patterns of evolution of religious beliefs—within the wider spectrum of society—forged on the three precepts of differentiation, rationalisation and worldliness.¹⁰ In the secular domain religion loses its specificity, is gradually differentiated, and social institutions are functioning without any ecclesiastical control. An autonomisation of life ensues, where confessional matters are voluntary, supported by a scientific and rational cosmology. Conscious co-

operation building and an associatory dimension emerge, manifested in practices, roles norms and unconstrained discussion in the cultural public sphere.¹¹

As already suggested, the Yugoslav experience had introduced—albeit delimited—notions of secularism, endowed with a communist rhetoric and its contained forcefulness. Under the ensuing condition of crisis and disintegration, Orthodoxy surfaced as the most crucial reference of Serbian distinction, national demarcation and an innate mechanism of anti-acculturation. Against a background of enduring faith in Orthodoxy, the probability of a purely secular domain would revolve around a diffused¹² form of the sacred, with one established church and a dominant fideistic system of worship. Diffused religion does not pertain to “implicit” or “invisible” beliefs, which cannot be located empirically in the realm of social or institutional life. In fact, it refers to the maintenance of affinitive links with the ecclesiastical body, observed at different levels without precluding an articulation of subjective perceptions and proclivities, beyond the doctrinal and functional—*cultus*—precepts of the official congregation. A personal appreciation of Orthodox spirituality could ideally assume the form of *sheilaism*, whereby biblical revelation coexists with individual and rational views of a moral and religious character.¹³

Considering Orthodoxy’s prominence as a permanent signifier of the Serbian human condition—an influence exhibited even in the behaviour of non-overt believers—and the “limits” of secularisation, which does not propagate the disappearance of religion, a question arises on the country’s potential for European integration. Could an Orthodox Serbia, with a salient anti-individualistic ethos, become an integrated member of the European constellation? The answer would be in the affirmative (an assumption supported by the Greek case), since the European idea is not delimited by confessional matters, but rather focuses on inclusion based on civic and political values. Such commonality of interest could also accommodate Serbia, pending on the substance of its structures—social, economic and political—and not solely on the convictions and orientation of its Christian faith.

Sigmund Freud had observed that an effort to cast religion out of the human civilisation would be rendered feasible only if a similar dogmatic construct is created, involving the psychological attributes of the sacred: sainthood, strictness, intolerance and the prohibition of reason.¹⁴ While for certain precursors of atheism—Feuerbach and Nietzsche—religious beliefs correlated to a human acknowledgement of weakness—in the absence of

autarky—the continuous presence of confessional precepts in human society, implies their permanence as an ontological referent.¹⁵ The same ontological constant is evident in the life of *Homo Serbicus*, as a spatial, temporal and spiritual thread, uniting personal and collective aspirations. In spite of the inevitable multiplication and increased autonomy of systems of representation and decision-making Orthodoxy continues to exert an impact on the motivation and sense of action in everyday life. In light of the above, it would be futile for the Serbian being to abhor a past—heavily laced in ritual and sanctified signifiers—for the panacea of an irreligionist future. A notional antithesis between forthcoming and ancestral experiences, in which the latter obscure the fulfilment of the former, would be a rather illogical proposition to support. For that reason, the contemporary and future viability of Serbianhood depends upon its ability to look backwards, so as to build upon and imaginatively transform a heritage which becomes more precious the more it is rationally and critically reflected upon.

Notes

- 1 Quoted in George Seferis' work, *Delphi*, translated by Philip Sherrard (Hanover: Munich and Ahrbeck, 1963), p. 8.
- 2 See Johannet, R., *Le Principe des Nationalités* (Paris: Alcan, 1918).
- 3 Quoted by Hayes, C. J. H., *Nationalism: A Religion* (New York: The Macmillan Press, 1960), pp. 164–65.
- 4 The Serbian peoples are invariably adherents to popular conspiracy theories, including the view of a non-supportive and bias Western community—mainly Roman Catholic sympathisers—that pursues the country's total annihilation or even the more obscure idea of self-defence—"the Serbian mirror"—originating from the work of the secretive group "69". According to Spasoje Vlajic—a Serb author and inventor—, this group was working on a defensive concept, utilising four distinct dimensions—material, intellectual, psychological and archetypal—in the creation of a reflective-energy shield. Based on TMTs (Tesla Magnifying Transmitters), it allegedly reflected the negative intentions of enemies, which were sent back, aimed at specific human targets. A number of incidents were attributed to this "inception", like the deteriorating health of A. Moch—former Austrian minister for foreign affairs—, the car accident of H. Kohl's son and the illness and death of M. Verns—Nato secretary general. See Vlajic, Spasoje, *Prvi Svetski Parapsiholoski Rat* (Belgrade: IPA-Miroslav, 1998).
- 5 See Thomas, Robert, *Serbia under Milosevic*, p. 6.
- 6 These views are elaborated upon by Stamkos, Yorgos and Kosanovic, Milica, *Μυστική Σερβία* (Thessaloniki: Εκδόσεις Αρχετυπο, 1999), pp. 177–86.

- 7 This particular perception of nations with shorter and different histories is broadly related to Hugh Setton-Watson's concept of old (established) as opposed to newly constituted ethnic groups whereby the latter originate in a voluntary association of a linguistic nature. See Setton-Watson, Hugh, *Nations and State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977).
- 8 The emergent, Orthodox-defined identity is distinctive: in its non-universal (poly-patriarchal) and national application, incorporating ecumenism with a measure of an ethnic autonomy—contrary to Catholicism—; and delimited by its decipherment of the human agent on the constituent substances of physical-metaphysical hypostases—a consideration that was never reconciled within the communist experience.
- 9 The appraisal of the Yugoslav crisis from a primarily religious perspective is supported by Anzulovic, Branimir, *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide*; Sells Michael A., *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia*; and Bax, Mart, *Medjugorje: Religion, Politics and Violence in Rural Bosnia* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1995).
- 10 See Tschannen, Olivier, "The Secularisation Paradigm: A Systematisation" in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 1991, pp. 395–415.
- 11 See Gellner, Ernest, *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals* (London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 1994); Ekiert G., "Democratisation Process in East Central Europe: a Theoretical Reconsideration" in *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 1991, pp. 285–313; and Keane, John (ed.), *Civil Society and the State*, (London: Verso, 1992).
- 12 The concept of "diffused religion" was coined by Cipriani, Roberto, "Religion and Politics; the Italian Case: 'Diffused Religion'" in *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions*, Vol. 58, No. 1, 1984, pp. 29–51; and "Diffused Religion and New Values in Italy" in Beckford, James A., and Luckmann, Tomas (eds.), *The Changing Face of Religion, Sage Studies in International Sociology*, 37 (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1991), pp. 25–48.
- 13 The term *sheilaism* refers to the faith of Sheila Larson, a young nurse, who describes her spiritual affinity as a culmination of both religious and rational elements. "I believe in God. I am not a religious fanatic. I can't remember the last time I went to church. My faith has carried me a long way. It's *sheilaism*. Just my own little voice." Quoted by Bellah, Robert Neely, *Habits of the Heart* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 221.
- 14 Sigmund Freud's views on the subject of religion are cited by Daniel, Zan, *Ο Θεος είναι φανατικός (Dieu est-il fanatique?)* (Athens: Πολις, 1998), p. 268.
- 15 See Kolakowski, L., *Philosophie de la religion* (Paris: Fayard, 1985).

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